

## **Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission Meeting Minutes**

July 07, 2016

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## CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Yakupzack: Good morning. Welcome to the July 7, 2016, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Commission Meeting. I call this meeting to order. Commissioner Courville, will you please lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Courville: All right, stand, please. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Chairman Yakupzack: Ms. Brogdon, will you please call the roll.

Ms. Brogdon: Chairman Yakupzack.

Chairman Yakupzack: Here.

Ms. Brogdon: Chad Courville.

Chad Courville: Here.

Ms. Brogdon: Bill Hogan.

Bill Hogan: Here.

Ms. Brogdon: Pat Manuel.

Ms. Brogdon: Bobby Samanie.

Bobby Samanie: Here.

Ms. Brogdon: Al Sunseri.

Al Sunseri: Here.

Ms. Brogdon: Mr. Chairman, there are five commissioners in attendance. We have a

quorum. Secretary Melancon is also present today.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Agenda Item No. 4, approval of the June 2, 2016 commission meeting minutes. Has the commission had the chance to review the minutes?

Commissioner Courville: So move to approve.

Commissioner Hogan: Second.

Next Speaker: Motion by Commissioner Courville to approve the June minute meeting minutes. A second by Commissioner Hogan, any public comment. All those in favor.

All: I.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any opposed? Hearing no opposition, motion passes. Agenda Item No. 5: Commission Special Announcements Personal Privilege. I'd like to turn over the floor to Secretary Melancon.

Secretary Melancon: Thank you. Mr. Chairman. It's good to be with you this morning and have you and the Commission here. I would like to, if I can, the last meeting we had the opportunity of introducing Mr. Bill Hogan from Ruston, who is a new at large member. This week, this month meeting here, we have two new members that are serving on their first meeting with the Commission. Robert, Bobby Samanie. Bobby is originally from South Terrebonne Parish. Relocated and living in Meraux now. He has been in the seafood business now for 40 plus years. I think that means you're either younger or you start young, Bobby, I'm not sure. But he's a native of Terrebonne Parish, been

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active as president of the American Shrimp Processors Association. He also serves on the Governor's Task Force and Shrimp Management, the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board, the Louisiana Shrimp Industry Review Panel, Louisiana Seafood Standards of Identity Task Force and the Louisiana Seafood Industry Advisory Board. Bobby will be serving as a commercial member of the Commission. Welcome, Bobby.

Bobby Samanie: Thank you.

Secretary Melancon: The second new member is Alfred 'Al' Sunseri. Al, for those of you who like oysters, has been in the oyster business his entire life with his brother. They have P & J Oyster Company in New Orleans. He's the owner and general manager, is a lifelong Louisiana resident. He's only managed his family oyster business and has been an advocate for Louisiana and Gulf of Mexico Oyster Industry since 1985. He was founding member of the Gulf Oyster Industry Council and served on several oyster boards. Al lives in New Orleans and finished college at Southeastern in Hammond. Al's term runs to 2020. Al, it's a pleasure to welcome you to the commission, and I hope y'all have as much fun as y'all can stand.

Al Sunseri: Thank you.

Secretary Melancon: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Commissioner Courville: Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Courville.

Commissioner Courville: On behalf of the Commission, welcome gentlemen. I do

know if you care to if you want to say a few words, it's up to you guys.

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Sunseri

Al Sunseri: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Commission. Mr. Secretary and people in the audience, this is humbling thing for me to be put on this commission. It means a lot. I've spent my entire life working with the oyster business. My family's been in the business, for 140 years and I'm very proud and humbled by this opportunity and hopefully we'll be able to do a lot of good things over these next few years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you Commissioner Sunseri. Commissioner Samanie.

Bobby Samanie: My name is Bobby Samanie. I'm originally from Terrebonne Parish, and my family has been in the shrimp business since 1938. We started off canning shrimp. We've changed directions with the industry as it's changed. Four years ago I moved to Saint Bernard Parish where the company I worked for opened up one of the largest plants in the state. We do any, anywhere between a hundred and 150,000 pounds of shrimp per day we process. I've served on this commission before and it's really an honor to help manage Louisiana's natural resources, and it's a large responsibility. I promise y'all I'm going to give it the best that I can, and I'm sure y'all won't be disappointed. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Commissioner Samanie. Any other special announcements or personal privilege by the Commission? Agenda Item No. 6, to hear

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enforcement reports from June,  
Captain Skena.

Captain Skena: Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission. For the month of June, we had 14 boating incidents, 12 injuries and 3 fatalities. We had 734 written citations, 424 written warnings, and 23 public assists. Inside your folder there is a few news releases from last month. Here are a synopsis of those new releases. While conducting a boating safety check in Terrebonne Parish, enforcement agent cited a subject for possessing 26 black bass, 16 over the legal limit. If convicted, the subject faces criminal fines, up to 60 days in jail and could be charged civil restitution for the illegally taken fish. The fish were seized and donated to a local charity. Agents responded to an anonymous tip in Lafourche Parish and cited four people for taking oysters off a private lease and from a polluted area. One of the subjects was additionally cited for not possessing a commercial gear license. Each subject faces criminal fines; up to 90 days in jail; 40 hours of community service; only allowed to fish oysters from a vessel equipped with a vessel monitoring device and possible revocation of their oyster harvester's license. The agency seized nine sacks of oysters and returned them to the water. They also seized the vessel and dredge on a department seizure order. Alan Gaspard, the second subject involved in cutting down trees on Spring Bayou Wildlife Management area was sentenced on June 16 in Avoyelles Parish for his involvement in cutting down over a hundred trees in order to block navigable access to an area where he regularly hunted. Gaspard was ordered to serve 2 years in jail suspended, pay \$250.00 to the Criminal Court Fund, \$400.00 in court cost, and \$20,000.00 in civil restitution to

the department. In addition to those monetary fines, the subject was also given 5 years of probation during which time he will not be allowed on any wildlife management area and not allowed to possess recreational hunting or fishing licenses. On June 29th, the enforcement academy graduated the 30<sup>th</sup> cadet class. Nine new agents have been added to our ranks and we wish them luck in their new careers. This concludes the enforcement report, unless there are questions, sir.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any questions for Captain Skena? Thank you, Captain Skena.

Captain Skena: Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Agenda Item No. 7, a hearing update by Ducks Unlimited on the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission funded waterfowl breeding grounds habitat work in Canada. Presenting here today is Mr. Dave Kustersky.

Mr. Dave Kustersky: Thank you, Chairman Yakupzack, Secretary Melancon, much appreciate the time on your agenda today to give you an update on the funds that you've dedicated to conservation on the Canadian breeding grounds. This is a 52-year, or 51-year partnership with Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and I'd like to just give you a really good snapshot. In your packets as well, is a report that has obviously more detail than what I'll present today. This contract year, the first year of a 3-year proposal that we provided is focused on three, two different major activities, habitat retention and habitat restoration. The habitat retention, land purchase, conservation easements are both perpetual in nature. They are there forever, and that's where the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries funds are focused. We also do

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conservation agreements as part of this. Pothole restoration, dense nesting cover; which is that nesting habitat for upland nesting ducks and forages and winter wheat. And all those programs are part of the proposal and use partner money, DU money and other noncom monies and other partners to make that happen. This is a Durr land purchase. This purchase was 315 acres south of Saskatoon Saskatchewan. As you can see it is about a half section of land that's got a lot of wetlands on it. The uplands were cultivated, so we will be converting that to grass, and we purchased that with Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries monies along with other partner monies, including DU. This land was purchased for an average price of \$606.00 per acre and is located in the Allen Dana Hills priority area. This is one of our highest waterfowl density landscapes with over 60 pairs per square miles in this landscape. On this project, there also was a wetland that one in the picture on the right that had been drained a large ditch coming out of it. So, as part of the purchase we restore any wetlands that have been drained, so that's the process of filling in that ditch that was created a number of years ago to drain that wetland. This is a conservation easement that was purchased. Martin's Olson Conservation Easement also in this last year this easement is 850 acres of incredible habitat in the Allen Dana Hills as well. High waterfowl density, high wetland density. This land was paid perpetual conservation easement for \$208.00 per acre on this particular piece of land. So, a pretty reasonable rate to get that there forever. All the wetlands and grasslands and habitat that you see there will be there in perpetuity. This is a project that was done with partner money. Matter for Marsh Wetland Rebuild. So this project is about replacing those culverts. This project was originally built in

1980. It served its life and needed to be rebuilt. So the culverts and some of the structure was dug out, replaced at the cost of about \$66.00 per acre and it's a 915-acre marsh. Wetland rebuilds we go through an extensive revision process where we look at these things, make sure they are still productive for waterfowl. This one was an incredible project, which is part of a larger complex of wetlands called Yorton South, and this one in particular just needed to be restored. We resigned all the agreements with the landowners to make sure this is there for another at least 30 years. This is a wetland restoration. Gaul Wetland Restoration, one small wetland within the landscape, and these are really what we targeted, these small wetlands 2.9 acre restoration. We do larger ones if there is an opportunity. But frankly what we've lost across the landscape is small wetland. That's what carries the waterfowl productivity on the breeding grounds is all these little wetlands that have been drained. So restoring this wetland is about putting that plug. That picture on the right is just the earth and plug that we use a cat, and I've got other pictures that it'll show you a little bit more on how you can do that. But basically 2.9-acre wetland restored and it cost about \$700.00 an acre to do that. Wet Project Nesting Covers. This is a piece of property that we purchased about 3 years ago and we got it seeded to grass this past year. Spent the money on it to put it to a nesting cover. This nesting cover is critical for waterfowl. This particular quarter section of the land had 85 acres of broken land or cultivated land that we planted to grass. And what we're trying to do is make it do this, create nests. So that was planted the first the year. We put a cover crop so they harvest, and then next year it'll be left idle and left idle, but typically harvested once every 4 to 5 years. So it's idle sitting

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there for ducks to nest in every year. And then you have to rejuvenate it, you've got to cut it or graze it in order to keep it healthy, but that's what we're trying to raise is ducks. Another project that we do is called 'winter wheat'. This is a field of winter wheat that was seeded last fall, October 1 that was the picture, that's about 3 weeks after it was seeded. So this go, over winter it survives over the winter. In May 3, 2016 this field looked like that. It is starting to provide a little bit of habitat, but not, no not a lot, pintails will nest in that. So this is what it looked on June 16, so it turns into this really lush vegetation that you can hide a nest in. Really attractive for Gadwall, later nesting Mallards, blue-wing teal, pintail a bunch of different species utilize this. This is one of our most effective partnerships with agriculture on the landscape. That annual crop that typically is spring, if we can get them to seed it in the fall it can provide tremendous nest cover for the waterfowl and some of the highest nest successes in the winter wheat program. I've got two more projects I wanted to show you. This is the Ingle Purchase. This is a quarter section that we purchased outright. We'll have it forever keep it in perpetuity and there is a number of wetland restorations on this project you can see it. A number of small downs and I'll show you a picture in a bit of how it looks when we build those. This project in particular, you know that you can see that it has a whole bunch of water on it and all the green area that is crosshatched that's all going to be planted to nesting cover. When we buy it we typically have to do some weed control to get it all in shape so we can plant a good mix of grassland species that can survive and compete. This is a conservation easement. This is a paid conservation easement also in the Allen Dana Hills. As you can see, we restored a fairly large wetland on the west side and a

smaller one in the middle. Again on this conservation easement this one was paid to keep all the wetlands and the existing grasslands on the landscape. The Ingle Purchase was \$101.00 per acre to purchase that piece of land, the one on the left and that conservation easement we paid \$235.00 an acre to have that habitat in perpetuity. So these are very cost-effective programs to have habitat on the ground forever. This is really what it looks like when we restore a wetland. It's as simple as taking a small dozer D-3 CAT or so and pushing up some dirt and filling a ditch. That's really what most of our wetland drainage is. When you deal with the Canadian prairies we don't have a whole lot of title drainage yet. Thank, God. Thank goodness that is mostly ditch and like this, that we can go back and restore it when we can get a CAT out there for a few bucks and push the dirt back in and then sign an easement and put it there forever. So this is really the opportunity to put those back on the ground and it's a pretty simple process. So that's a number of projects that we did. That's not all that we did with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries money because certainly it would take a much longer presentation for me to talk about every project. But these are some of the highlights of projects that we are able to do, because you provided some dollars to Canada. This is why we do it. As you know, a number of, significant portion of the waterfowl that winter down here in Louisiana that you get the opportunity to hunt and harvest, come from the breeding grounds in Canada. The band return information clearly demonstrates that connection to Saskatchewan and the other prairie providences as well as the northern U.S. So providing that support up there is what provides that habitat. We just don't have, it's a vast, vast landscape. We do not

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have the resources to do all the conservation work that needs to be done to make this landscape productive for waterfowl for years to come. So with your partnership we are able to make a difference. In Saskatchewan, your dollars were focused on some of these habitats the Allen Dana Hills, I mentioned right in the middle of the providence. The Upper Sina bonne is on the east side of the providence and then the lighting creek landscape is in the southeast, so those are some of the landscapes of those projects I, I showed you fall in. But, we obviously work in all these red areas and that's a thunderstorm map that gives you waterfowl densities. The hotter the color, the higher the waterfowl density and that's driven primarily by high wetland densities, lots of water on the landscape. Why do we need to do this? Well, we continue to lose habitat. This is a scene from 1958, and it, and it identifies all the wetlands and kind of that line as agricultural drainage has been moving east to west in this landscape. This is the same landscape in 2010 continued loss of wetlands as you go west. It spreads as you get a network of ditches, they just continue to add ditches to the landscape. Here's another scene of wetlands in 1958 and here's a scene in 2010 of those same wetlands. That entire property has been drained. This is the landscape that we have to deal with, there is a number of these in Saskatchewan in some of our priority areas. As you can see with all those wetlands there, you would have 20 to 30 wetlands per a quarter section for 160 acres on that landscape, now they're gone. This is the landscape that we need to work in to restore those wetlands and protect what's left. What do we lose, obviously we lose our waterfowl and wildlife factories if we lose wetlands. We lose flood protection, places to hunt with friends and our health our most valued commodity on earth is water and we lose our

quality of life just having that place to go. So how did we do it? Last year, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries provided \$328,702.00. Ducks Unlimited committed to patch that with an equal amount of money and we used those dollars to apply for and got approved for \$657,404.00 U.S. Therefore every dollar that Louisiana provided, we added \$3.00 at minimum. This is just the basic match that we provide. Ducks Unlimited has many other sources of matching, including other Canadian dollars and 39 other states, fish and wildlife agencies that provide money to do work on the breeding grounds in Canada, of which 12 more in the, in the providence of Saskatchewan. So you're one of 13 states that provides money to do breeding grounds work in Saskatchewan. Your investment of \$328,702.00 leveraged to \$1.3 million. As you know the Canadian and the U.S. dollar always fluctuate in value. Well, right now your dollar is a lot stronger than ours. So we were able to get an exchange gain of 1.3. So that \$1.3 million turned into \$1.7 million on the breeding grounds in Canada when you turn it into Canadian funds. So we were able to expand over \$1.7 million dollars on conservation and habitat. The goals that we propose to do in this first year of this propos, of the three year proposal was to retain 3,500 acres of habitat, restore 67 acres of wetlands, and restore 900 acres of grassland through upland as well as continue to manage over 90,000 acres. What we were able to do was over 5,400 acres of habitat retention, 85 acres of wetland restoration, and over 1,700 acres of upland restoration and managed 150,000 acres of existing habitat. So far exceeded the, the planned goals for the funding that we had requested and spent the majority of the money as you can see in habitat retention. I flip up the next slide – this has the detail it's in the report I provided. I am not going to go into

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detail as obviously, there is, there is more numbers in here than we intend to or care to go through right now. But clearly, a big chunk if you look at the top four categories those are all perpetual protection. That adds up to over a million dollars of the \$1.1 million spent out of this budget. That's where Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries dollars are dedicated just into that perpetual activity. Keeping those grasslands and wetlands there forever. Acres equals ducks. It's as simple as that. You put grass on the landscape, you restore grasslands, you protect grasslands, and you're going to get waterfowl, that's what the limiting factor is. That is how the landscape has changed and that's what's caused our issues with waterfowl production over the years. If you restore wetlands, you get ducks, the same thing. We need grasslands and wetlands to have waterfowl produced on the breeding grounds of Canada. It's that partnership that you have bought into, that you've invested into that allows Ducks Unlimited to go up there and make difference on the breeding grounds. We've been doing this for 77 years up in Canada, 78 years here in the U.S. Our conservation work is, is long, and your partnership in fact has been as I mentioned 51 years, so that's 77 years we've existed. So that partnership is absolutely critical to ensuring that we continue to do the right thing on the breeding grounds and make a difference for waterfowl. With that, I want to thank Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries for your partnership; for your ongoing support of conservation on the Canadian breeding grounds. The prairie pothole region in Canada is the breadbasket of waterfowl production for this continent. Your partnership in making that happen and continuing to support the Prairie Habitat Joint Venture, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and Ducks Unlimited and conservation work on the

breeding grounds is critical and valued. In my last comments I'll say that what the breeding grounds look like today. We're a little drier than we've been for a while. I wouldn't say we're into the hardcore part of a drought, but we certainly are a lot drier than we have been. The true prairie part, the southern part of Saskatchewan and Alberta are fairly dry. It was quite dry this spring and so not a lot of habitat there for the, for the ducks coming up early in the spring. The parklands, which is just north of that south of the Boreal Forest, was a little bit wetter and has received significant rain especially in Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan. So we are going to have bird production. It won't be, I don't believe what we've seen over the last number of years, but frankly some of the wetlands do need to dry out. So it's this cycle that's critical. The risk that we run is as things dry out, there is that risk that the agriculture will go after those ponds that are left. They can access those ponds, get ditches into them and we can lose more habitat. So we have to stay diligent continue to do this conservation work and make a difference on the breeding grounds. If you have any questions, I will be more than happy to answer.

Chairman Yakupzack: No questions from the Commission, we appreciate your presentation Dave, and I do have one public comment here who does not wish to speak, Mr. Charles Williams of the Louisiana Waterfowl Alliance is here, and notes that their organization is very interested in these waterfowl project reports.

Mr. Dave Kustersky: Excellent. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: So, thank you.  
Agenda Item No. 8. To hear and update on

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the White Fronted Goose Telemetry Project.  
Mr. Paul Link, presenting.

Mr. Paul Link: All right. Thanks, Chairman, members of the Commission. My name is Paul Link. I'm the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Coordinator here at Wildlife and Fisheries. And today I am here to give you an update on the White Fronted Goose Research Project that we started last fall. Since we do have a quite a few new faces in the room this morning, I'm going to again, go over a lot of the information that you saw at the last update before getting into the updates of what we've learned over the last winter and this spring. First briefly talk about the technology advancements. This project couldn't have come at a better time. Two years ago if we had wanted to do this project, we'd have been using the transmitter pictured on the left, which is a satellite PTT transmitter they are quite large, they are 80 grams, they're mounted via a backpack with a double-bodied loop harness system, that have relatively limited data capabilities. You can get four to seven locations per day. They're transmitted back through the satellites which are slow and expensive and they're just relatively cumbersome. The transmitter on the right is what we deployed last winter. It's cutting edge technology. These are the first wild birds to carry that transmitter in the wild. They collect the data via the same satellites, but then they transmit it through cellular tower networks, which allows to collect a lot more locations daily and then transmit it very quickly and efficiently through the cellular tower network. And they are also quite a bit cheaper. Believe it or not to. Again, moving on to the technology itself, these things are solar powered. Birds are incredibly lightweight they evolved for flight which is, weight you know, pretty

important to minimize weight. So they have a solar battery, they have sub meter accuracy, which is very important for classifying locations and finding what these birds are doing. Again the duration of locations we can collect, we program these to collect locations every 30 minutes both day and night last winter. An important thing too they can store up to 45,000 locations on board in a hard drive. These things aren't in cell phone range as a lot of you guys are aware, and they breed and spend the summer in areas that hopefully will never have cell phone coverage, and they also collect a lot of important information that's previously not been able to be recorded. Abiotic and ambient data are recorded every time those things log a lat and long. And, when, when the birds are in flight they have an accelerometer that allows them to, to generate at altitude speed the bearing of their flight, and a bunch of other, information that is probably not quite as critical to us at this point. And lastly, these transmitters since they are solar powered, they have a life expectancy of 3 to 4 years. So we're going to get this fall's migration and up to two more which they are going to allow us to look at migration stopovers, breeding ranges, filopatry, site fidelity and a whole bunch of other things that have previously been unknown to us. But first I had to catch them. These things aren't very easy catch. Primarily, because they won't get on bait like most other waterfowl will. That's pretty helpful when you can go dump a bag of grain out and get a bunch of bird's heads down on something. White fronts for some reason or other don't like a, a free handout, and they're also incredibly weary. Long live the smart birds, so they don't want to approach anything out of the ordinary. This is one particular set that I made on Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, that clump of vegetation there is a net box,

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that I designed for this project that allowed me to trap out in these wide-open habitats and hide the nets. Occasionally hid the nets a little bit too well. That clump of vegetation on the far right is a 40 by 50 net that's going to be coming out of a small box. Everything on the right half, the right half of the side of the picture would probably be killed and injured and everything on the left would probably have the net fly right over the top of them. So sometimes we hit them a little too well. But after about 8 hours of waiting for those birds to finally move off of that site, we were able to fire the net. This particular capture was 13 birds we marked, 11 total birds, all adults. Roughly three fourths females and the remainder males. We were able to determine age and sex, glue the transmitters on, hold for a few minutes, let them orient to their new jewelry and then release them back at their capture sites with their, their counterparts, usually within a half an hour. And then it was simply a matter of waiting for the data. I was also able to get visuals on a couple of these birds. And I was pretty happy to find out that they were acting normally a few days after letting these go I came across this bird here that was still, still with it pair, with its mate, and it's young were also in toe. They were about 10 yards beyond this and out of the spotting scope range, but they were acting pretty normally. Getting around pretty well so that was encouraging to see. And then it's simply a matter of waiting for those birds to fly back within range of a cell tower. This is what that data looks like, again, I don't expect you to see all this, but it's a pretty, pretty cumbersome large file. There is a lot of really basic things that are important in here. Like a date and time stamp, the lat and long but then also a lot of other things, the speed, the solar outlook, temperature, barometric pressure, lots of other things that we're going to be able to

use analytically later down the road. It makes a little more sense when you pull out this information, in some kind of mapping software. This is what that one individual's bird looks like. The squares are stationary locations. When a bird is basically walking or resting, preening, doing some other kind of non-movement type activity and the triangles are birds in flight. Anything over 7 kilometers per hour. And then the lines connect to locations, so every point on here is 30 minutes apart. I'll go through a couple of examples of some birds. This was a bird named Seafly that marked near Thornwell in October. Shortly after marking her, she moved around between the Elton and Fenton area for a couple of weeks and then back down into the Thornwell area. On opening weekend of the coastal zone, she took off. She apparently thought World War III was coming and got out of the coastal zone. Went up to the Monroe area up between Winnsboro and Monroe, hung out there for two weeks, and then on opening morning of the east zone, she again took off, heading north, northeast out of the Monroe area for Arkansas. You can see some of the data associated with her. She was at the, the time stamp on there is UTC that Universal time so you need to subtract 6 hours, so at 6:46 on that Saturday of opening morning of the east zone she was heading out 38 knots at 451 meters, getting pretty, pretty interesting information and she never returned to Louisiana after that she stayed north. Another bird named GS365 a couple of days after we marked her near Thornwell she took off to Stuttgart, flew nonstop to Stuttgart. Spent less than one day there, and came right back to the exact same field that we captured her in. Pretty remarkable movements, and that bird as well stuck around in Louisiana until opening weekend of the coastal zone. Went to that same general area near Monroe for just a few days

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and left Louisiana prior to the east zone opening. Spent another week or so near Lake Village, Arkansas and then bounced up to the northern MVA, eventually spending most of the winter in the Boot Hill, Missouri, but again, never came back to Louisiana throughout the winter. So where am I know. I've been working with Dr. Collier over at LSU on some neat home range maps. This one of the, the few birds that stayed in southwest Louisiana long enough to give us some data in the area that we were primarily interested in. These large polygons are 95 percent home range estimate maps and the smaller shaded areas within those polygons are the 50 percent core areas. And basically what I'm trying to show here is that the birds move around a lot more during the hunted time periods than they do during the split. They basically don't move during the split. They find their groceries. They're basically undisturbed, so they don't move around a whole lot. Not surprisingly. And perhaps the more important thing I'm trying to do right now is classify all these locations. I have roughly 60,000 locations on these 11 birds, from the time we let them go until they either went off line or left cell phone tower coverage. So I'm trying to identify every point. All of these 60,000 locations, primarily using remote sensing stuff, which I've learned has a fairly large error rate, which I'm going to be trying to work around trying to ground truth and to verify some of these locations down the road. But once we get all these locations classified, it's going to be pretty important for us. We're going to be able to go back and model the habitat use through time. Going back in and looking at historic data, but I don't think many of us are going to be surprised if we find that there is less capacity of the landscape to the winter white fronts now, as in the past. More importantly where are they are now? We had seven

birds that survived the winter and made it back to Canada. This is the last locations that we had on those birds. You can see four of them are on the northern reaches of the prairie pothole region in Canada near the parklands, and three of them miraculously found cell tower range way up in the middle of nowhere. It's also pretty interesting to see where these things are going. Those three lines heading north are heading to very well establish breeding areas for white fronts. So we're pretty excited to see this fall when they start heading back south where they're going to, where they had spent the summer. And just to put this in perspective, where these birds are and in Central Canada right now, it's roughly the same distance from the Gulf Coast to the prairie Canada's. These things make tremendous movements; roughly 3,000 miles one-way. Of course they do this a minimum of twice a year, plus all those other flights throughout the winter. So these things are really getting around a lot. So what about the others, we had seven that made it back to Canada this spring. We had two that I suspect were crippled and un-retrieved by hunters. I had two banded birds that were banded and captured with two birds that were radio marked that were called into the bird-banning lab and reported. I got the contact information for those hunters and called them and chatted with them a little bit and both of them had recalled pulling feathers or sailing birds off that they were unable to retrieve. So it seems less than coincidental that they went offline on the same day that birds that were captured and marked with them were killed. We recovered and redeployed one transmitter. We were able to find one transmitter laying in a soybean field near Brinkley, Arkansas. But I was able to send the coordinates to a friend and colleague there who was able to find that transmitter.

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We suspect it was crippled from a hunter as well. It was about 200 yards from a spread of decoys. and I also want to mention too that the published literature for crippling rates for geese runs from 25 to nearly 100 percent, so this is pretty typical of what we would expect to lose a couple of birds to hunting and crippling. I suspect we had one transmitter failure. One of these birds had a declining solar panel. We suspect it had a declining voltage over the couple days prior to it going offline. We don't know what happened with that. But we suspect a failure. And then we have one that we simply have no information leading us any indication of why it went off line, but lots of things happen to these. if they killed by a rapture, fly into a tower or something and, and land face down in the mud, they aren't going to charge or if they are out of cell phone tower we're just never going to hear from them again. But overall it's a pretty good rate to have 7 of 11 birds make it to the prairies. We're pretty excited about that. So our future plans, we are going to continue monitoring the seven birds. Hopefully they are all going to survive the summer and head back south with their young and all that data. We're also going to deploy 15 to 20 more units this fall. And then again, hopefully in the fall of 2017 and we have a whole host of analytical opportunities with this data. There is so, there's so much information coming in here that it's kind of hard to wrap our head around right now with what we have. But I'm hoping to find somebody with more time and more analytical capabilities than me down the road to help with this stuff. again, the, the, going to deploy more units for each of the next two years and there is quite a few new advancements in technology this year again that are going to allow us to get even more unprecedented information. They've been able to reduce the size of the transmitters by

5 grams. They've got a new microprocessor in them that is going to allow us to differentiate between different movements behaviors. They say that they are going to be able to tell us when a bird is actively foraging. When its neck is moving around in this particular behavior or when it's preening or sleeping or flying, so we're going to have all kinds of new energetics type stuff that we'll be able to do and time budget stuff done remotely through these transmitters. So pretty exciting stuff and lastly, I'd like to thank all of our donors that helped make this happen. All those transmitters were purchased by a private individuals with their own money who stepped up, probably not knowing how risky their investment would be. These transmitters again had never been deployed on birds. So basically like buying a fancy \$3,000.00 laptop computer and just throwing it in the air and hoping that you get something out of it. So again, we, we really appreciate their support for making this happen and particularly Chad and Bart for their work get this project up and going off the ground. With that, I'll take any questions?

Chairman Yakupzack: No questions from the Commission, it appears Paul. I would just like to make a comment and thank you and Larry Reynolds. The entire waterfowl staff for taking on what appears to be a cutting edge investigation and study. We're proud of you all and proud of this department for being a leader in these wintering birds that are so dear to so many. Being a leader in these wintering birds, in research on their habits when they come down the flyway. Thank you. Moving on, we have Agenda Item No. 9 to consider a Declaration of Emergency for extended falconry season for Rails and Gallinules. Presenting, Mr. Steve Smith.

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Mr. Steve Smith: Thank you Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, good morning ladies and gentlemen. My name's Steve Smith. I'm the WMA program manager for our wildlife division. I am also responsible for preparing and proposing our annual notice of intent for hunting season rules and regs. The notice of intent was proposed and adopted in April by you guys, and subsequently we discovered 1 error in the proposed and adopted migratory bird seasons and that was the extended falconry season for Rails and Gallinule. As you know, we are provided with a framework by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service each year within which we can adopt seasons. The proposed season which you adopted for extended falconry for Rails and Gallinule was off, erroneously, by 1 day, and this Declaration of Emergency would be a measure to correct that error, so with that I ask you to consider this Declaration of Emergency changing the extended falconry for Rails and Gallinule from November 2<sup>nd</sup> through January 31<sup>st</sup> to November 3<sup>rd</sup> through January 31<sup>st</sup> therefore placing that season within that allowable framework by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Any questions?

Chairman Yakupzack:  
Commissioner Courville?

Commissioner Courville: Run, run that, run those dates again that you're looking for?

Mr. Steve Smith: Okay. That, it would be a change. What was adopted is November 2<sup>nd</sup>

Commissioner Courville: Right.

Mr. Steve Smith: – through January 31, okay? We would change it to November 3<sup>rd</sup> through January 31. It would basically shorten it by 1 day.

Commissioner Courville: Okay the, the DE's saying November 1<sup>st</sup> that I'm reading.

Next Speaker: It's a, I'm sorry, it's effective, it will become effective November 1<sup>st</sup>. DEs are only good for a certain –

Commissioner Courville: Okay.

Mr. Steve Smith: – period of time; therefore, it would have to become effective November 1<sup>st</sup> to carry through January 31.

Commissioner Courville: Okay.

Mr. Steve Smith: But the actual date is November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Commissioner Courville: Okay.

Mr. Steve Smith: Yes sir.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any other question or discussion? Do we have a motion?

Commissioner Samanie: So Moved.

Chairman Yakupzack: Motion by Commissioner Samanie.

Commissioner Courville: Second.

Chairman Yakupzack: Second by Commissioner Courville. Any public comment on this matter? Seeing no public comment all those in favor?

All: I.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any opposed? Hearing no opposition the motion carries.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you Mr. Smith. Agenda Item No. 10, to hear and

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update on the public comments on the black bass regulations on the Sabine River notice of intent presented May 5, 2016. Presenting is Mr. Alex Perret.

Mr. Alex Perret: Good morning Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission. My name is Alex Perret. I am the operations manager for Inland Fisheries here this morning just to report results of our public comment period that we had which was notice of intent to reduce the large-mouth bass regulations on the Lower Sabine River to 12 inches. We received a total of 2 comments during the public comment period. Both were favorable to the regulation change. One of the comments was made by a local bass tournament organizer and he was very much in favor of the change. He felt like it would allow them to have more events on that section of the river. According to the notice of intent, the secretary has the authority to finalize this rule and that will be our recommendation and I'll take any questions y'all have. That's it.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any questions? Seeing no questions, thank you Mr. Perret –

Mr. Alex Perret: Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: – for your presentation. Do you have anything? Okay, moving along Agenda Item No. 11, to consider a notice of intent to establish the rules and regulations on the importation of cervid carcasses. Presenting is Mr. Johnathan Bordelon.

Mr. Johnathan Bordelon: Thank you Mr. Chairman, Commission. Today we are proposing for your consideration a cervid carcass importation ban. We define cervids as any animal or of the family cervidy

including but not limited to whitetail deer, mule deer, elk, moose, caribou, fallow, axis, red and reindeer. The notice actually reads no person shall import, transport or possess any cervid carcass or part of a cervid carcass originating from outside of Louisiana with the following exceptions: Deboned meat, antlers, and clean skull plates with antlers, clean skulls without tissue attached, capes, tanned hides, finished taxidermy products and clean cervid teeth. Approved parts or deboned meat transported from other states must be legally possessed from the state it was taken. Approved parts and deboned meat from other states must contain a possession tag with the hunter's name, out-of-state license number, address, the species, date and location of harvest. Also cervids transported in or through the state in violation of the provisions of the ban shall be seized and disposed of in accordance of Wildlife and Fisheries Commission and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries rules and regulations. So why propose this. One of the reasons we're proposing this and the primary reason is a disease known as chronic wasting disease. We'll refer to it as CWD from this point. CWD is a neuro-degenerative disease affecting cervids. There is a small thumb drive that each of you are provided. There's actually some great information on there about chronic wasting disease. Dr. Lacour, Louisiana Partner Wildlife and Fisheries' veterinarian presented that to the Commission in April. Of course some of you here today weren't privy to that presentation so I went ahead and put that supplemental information for you to review at your leisure, but CWD it's basically a neural disease. There's prions basically, mutated proteins that are mis-folded. These proteins are actually shed into the environment and basically what happens with this disease is tiny holes are actually eaten into the brain so the animal at

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some point's going to become emaciated, it's going to become lethargic and it's going to eventually die, perish. What's so scary about this disease is that it persists in the environment without a host so that makes it very different from other diseases that are transmitted between wildlife. This is something that once it's on the landscape it's there for quite for some time.

Environmental conditions are going to determine just how long but it's going to be a number of years. There's been cases where infected animals in captive facilities have been depopulated and the area basically void of captive cervids for some time then the area re-stocked and then after it re -stocked they basically come down with the disease again so we know that it persists in the environment and once we have it we're going to basically have to manage it over time so what we're attempting to do is prevent this and that's the method that we're choosing to employ here. A couple of other facts, 1 or 2 years before animals become symptomatic, so it's a slow progression as mentioned before, it's 100 percent fatal in cervids. Prevention is the only method of defense. There's only postpartum testing at this time which basically means we have to have a dead animal to get a positive or negative test. 23 states and 2 Canadian providences are infected. All of this data comes from the CWD Alliance. The 23, sometimes read 24, there's some debate and argument. There's some states that on their web site aren't included, because they've had maybe just in captive facilities and no further outbreaks outside of that facility but regardless, its 23 states is the accepted number including 2 Canadian provinces. What is LDWF's response to CWD? First we do have a CWD plan. We've had one back since the early 2000s. It was revised in 2016. In addition to that we have an importation ban for captive cervids. These

are basically the live animals. That ban was first implemented by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Commission back in 1998 as a moratorium. It was renewed again in 2002 and in 2005 it was adopted in perpetuity so we basically don't allow live captive cervids in Louisiana. To back that up the Louisiana Department of Agriculture who regulates the captive cervid industry in Louisiana placed a moratorium on importation in 2012 so basically the borders are closed to live deer, lot, or live cervids from entering the state. One of the other things is we've done some diligent testing dating back to 2002, we've tested 7,870 cervids dating back to that time. Early on we were testing pretty much state-wide. We were just trying to determine if the disease was out there. Our sampling now has become much more focused and targeted. Basically we're testing urologic animals, animals that are symptomatic. We're also testing road kills. We're also testing animals in or adjacent to captive facilities since we deemed those to be the greatest threat. So the third thing or the next step is proposing an actual carcass importation ban. So basically what this is going to do is going to prohibit a hunter who takes a deer from outside of Louisiana from bringing it in unless they meet those exceptions that we mentioned earlier. Arkansas and Texas are the latest states to test positive. Arkansas, their positives came in 2000 and 16, first from a hunter-harvested deer animal that appeared to be healthy. It was an elk in Newton County, Arkansas. It tested positive. Results came in to them in February. Subsequent to that they had a deer then once they found those two hunter-harvested samples, they intensively harvested animals as an agency within those areas and they turned out many more animals in addition to those hunter-harvested animals. The prevalence rate was

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actually quite high. At a rate so high, pretty comparable to what you see on the landscape when you've had CWD for a decade or so. So it basically just went undetected which is very scary. One thing I'll mention, they had a pretty diligent testing program, too. They had tested over 7,000 animals before they ever got a positive which is very close to what we tested with 7800. So, it's just a matter of finding it in some cases and that was the case in Arkansas. What we're proposing here today, the carcass importation ban, this isn't anything new. We're not the first to bring this to the table. Right now 36 of 50 states have some form of a carcass importation ban. Information in your packet may say 35 and the reason is Mississippi's actually did not go into effect until late last week. So at the time I put the information together, it was a proposal they had and it was actually finalized as of last week. So they are the 36<sup>th</sup> and we're proposing to be the 37<sup>th</sup> state with some form of a carcass importation ban. And it's 23 of 29 eastern states. As mentioned before, CWD, it slowly moves in a wild deer herd. But really the big fear where it hopscotches and jumps across the state is when a live animal is moved and then obviously it's shedding those prions into the environment or a cervid carcass is moved and those prions are disposed into the environment where they then can be up taken by cervids and re-infect a new population. If anyone has any questions, I'd be happy to answer them but there's the information in your packets, includes everything I presented including some supplemental information about chronic wasting disease, in addition to some information on Arkansas.

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Sunseri.

Commissioner Sunseri: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Johnathan, is there any kind of way to treat these animals that are infected with CWD?

Johnathan Bordelon.: No, sir. There's actually no treatment for CWD. Once the animals contract the disease, it's going to be fatal. There's not really even an easy decontamination. This is something that you cannot even kill in the environment with bleach. It takes high heat or an alkaline bath, so it's not necessarily a living organism. It's a mutated protein which can be transmitted or taken up by other animals. It's shed into the environment by urine and feces. You know, that's the primary mode at which it's shed into the environment. And you know, obviously it's also going to be part of that carcass so if that carcass is left to decay in the environment then those prions at that point will become part of the environment and they can actually then at that point infect other animals. So there is no treatment for CWD nor is there any type of vaccine or prevention. You know, your only real tool or method for dealing with the disease is simply just trying to prevent it. So, obviously we're just promoting a preventative measure, in hopes to minimize the risk of deer in our state being infected by the disease.

Commissioner Sunseri: Is there any way to treat an area that's found to be infected?

Johnathan Bordelon: No, sir. There isn't. Once it's in the environment, it's going to be there.

Commissioner Sunseri: And there's no, and is anyone doing any kind of work on trying to see about eliminating it from the environment or –

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Johnathan Bordelon: Yes, sir. There's extensive research being done on chronic wasting disease but at this time there's no practical means of eliminating it from the environment. Obviously it can be in a laboratory setting. It can be destroyed under high heat. For instance, a carcass could be burned up at a high temperature in an incinerator and that will actually destroy the prions. But, you know, those methods obviously just can't be applied to the landscape.

Commissioner Sunseri: Thank you.

Johnathan Bordelon: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Sunseri: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Commissioner Courville: Mr. Chairman, I –

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Courville.

Commissioner Courville: Mr. Bordelon, I got a couple of questions if you can bear with me. So in this notice of intent, so will it be department staff who's going to bear the responsibility of inspecting – how, sort of how do you – so if you develop this ban on importation, how do you police it or enforce it? What's that going to look like? Are you going to come to my house? Are you going to go to a taxidermy? How are you going to know?

Johnathan Bordelon: No. Obviously that won't really be a practical approach of enforcing it. We'll have the regulation out there in hopes that the majority of people –

Commissioner Courville: Discourage

Next Speaker: – actually will abide by this rule.

Commissioner Courville Okay.

Johnathan Bordelon: And then if a carcass is observed by our enforcement staff and it doesn't meet any of the provisions listed as far as the tagging requirements, and it's deemed to be a deer from out of state, then they'll have a mean or mechanism for confiscating that animal and removing it, you know, or removing that risk from our landscape or from Louisiana.

Commissioner Courville: So, it, just I sort of playing it out, you would anticipate that a lot of this burden is going to fall on a taxidermist and the taxidermists throughout this state.

Johnathan Bordelon: Certainly.

Commissioner Courville: So an obvious and an easy place to go and sport around and look for this stuff is going to be there. What burden then falls on the taxidermists of this state that if, I'm, and I for some reason go out of state. I shoot a nice deer. I bring it to a taxidermist, whoever. He's got it in his freezer and it's sitting there and maybe I tagged. Maybe I went through the right procedures. Maybe I didn't, but now it's in his freezer. It's got my tag on it. Does he bear any burden if you will, to ensure that he's not accepting carcasses that will violate the provisions in this new rule that we're considering?

Johnathan Bordelon: And that may be a better question for our legal counsel, or possibly even enforcement but the responsibility would still – I mean, the regulation, would be accepting, if he accepted an intact carcass that didn't meet

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the exceptions listed, he would be accepting an animal that was basically illegally brought into the state in a violation of Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Rules and Regulations.

Commissioner Courville: No, and I don't need an answer today, but it's something as we go through the comment period, we need to be able to answer that because, if I'm a taxidermist, I'm going to want to know that answer.

Johnathan Bordelon: Certainly.

Commissioner Courville: And then beyond that, as an assumed taxidermist, if you will, how am I going to be able to know that, you know, I'm in the business to make money obviously, and I get this kid. I'm assuming these guys are pretty skilled at knowing what isn't parts that would be accepted and parts that wouldn't be accepted, at some point there's going to be some gray area there. Is there going to be any kind of a material where these guys can have a good sense that, yeah, this is one that is in good shape or this is one I need to be a little suspicious of. At some point I think enforcement of this is going to be problematic. I guess I'll disclose where I intend to vote on this thing. I'm in favor of this. I just think there's a lot of tentacles that are going to come with this that we need to flesh out so that we can provide some level of comfort because I know a lot of people, probably some people in this room, will go out of state and harvest a nice deer. And they're going to want to do something with it so either they'd have to get it, establishing some protocols, if you, or some guidance for the hunter that, all right, I go in there. I kill it, maybe I need to go in, and I shoot it in Mississippi. I need to get a pressure washer. You know, some logical things that the

everyday hunter can do to make sure he doesn't get himself in a bad position when he brings that animal back into Louisiana would be beneficial to make this work. My other quick questions would be, from a transportation of chronic wasting disease and these prions, is there any other mechanism by which they can come in outside of a live animal or a dead animal into this state? Can some other conduit bring it over? Like if a coyote eats a deer and he brings it over. Can it be transported by those means as well?

Johnathan Bordelon: The prions themselves, the likelihood would obviously come from the methods that you've mentioned. You know, and you talk about shedding those into the environment. It would have to be something that would be loaded up on a trailer and transported.

Commissioner Courville: Okay.

Johnathan Bordelon: So, –

Commissioner Courville: So we're not worried, it's this –

Johnathan Bordelon: Right.

Commissioner Courville: It's mainly about moving deer parts.

Johnathan Bordelon: It's about moving deer, live deer or, in this case, deer parts that could potentially be infected.

Commissioner Courville: And then, maybe my second to last, the sites in Arkansas, were those on sort of public private land or were those in captive pens?

Johnathan Bordelon: No, those were actually free ranging deer.

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Commissioner Courville: Free ranging –

Johnathan Bordelon: In Arkansas there is no captive industries.

Commissioner Courville: Okay.

Johnathan Bordelon: So there was deer pen industry or cervid, captive cervid industry in Arkansas.

Commissioner Courville: Same thing in Texas from the sites that tested positive there?

Johnathan Bordelon: Well, Texas was different. Texas was actually captive cervids. So in Texas their positives were actually within pens.

Commissioner Courville: Okay.

Johnathan Bordelon: The scary part with that is the trace-outs from those pens. Some of those, the one particular positive in 2015, there were more than 19 trace-outs. Basically meaning animals from that infected pen that were moved from that pen to other pens and when you looked at the map the scary part is some of those counties were actually very close to our eastern, I mean, our western boundary or the east Texas boundary. So, that's kind of the worry with that. The fact that's in the captive herd in Texas to some degree makes it even scarier, because of the movement of those animals across the state and the slow detectability in that. So, certainly, because it's in the captive cervids in Texas doesn't make it any less fearful that what we're seeing in Arkansas.

Commissioner Courville: And then my very last question, captive pens here in Louisiana,

they are allowed to move a captive animal within state boundaries, correct?

Johnathan Bordelon: Within the state but you can't transport deer in or out of Louisiana right now.

Commissioner Courville: And the captive trade operation if you will, is overlooked by Department of Ag and Forestry.

Johnathan Bordelon: LA Department of Ag and Forestry.

Commissioner Courville: And what kind of authority does the department have in that regard and how do we get a sense for how well that captive pen is being, the oversight if you will. We could have a sense for how –

Johnathan Bordelon: The Department of Ag, obviously, they are the regulatory agency. We do have some oversight into new permits but the participants that are in the program, they're basically just one on one dealing with the Department of Ag. So we're more or less out of the loop with those guys. Where we are in the loop is within the new permits. They basically have to meet certain provisions and we actually inspect those facilities prior to them being permitted. and that's something that dates back that there was even a lawsuit filed by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries against the Department of Agriculture early on, because of the division or the loss of oversight, but unfortunately you know we weren't successful in that endeavor and right now, Department of Ag is the regulatory agency for the captive cervid industry in Louisiana.

Commissioner Courville: I lied, last question. Is there going to, is there an open

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exchange currently between the Department of Ag and Forestry and data sharing if you will with Wildlife and Fisheries or is there a bit of a gap? Do we need to bridge that gap?

Johnathan Bordelon: No, we do work with them obviously and it's, you know, it's to our advantage to do so that information obviously is very important and we've attended meetings with them and we do have open dialogue with them. They provide us information upon request, so we do receive information on number of pens, where they're located, all of that information is shared.

Commissioner Courville: Okay.

Johnathan Bordelon: But, but we're out of that regulatory loop with the exception of new proposed pens.

Commissioner Courville: Okay. Thanks.

Johnathan Bordelon: Yes sir.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any other questions? Do we have a motion to –

Audience member: I'm sorry, I didn't fill out a card.

Chairman Yakupzack: But look, let's wait for them to see if the motion is passed please. We have a motion?

Commissioner Courville: Yeah. So Moved

Commissioner Bill Hogan: Second

Chairman Yakupzack: Okay, so, motion to approve the NOI and second. Any public comment. Sir, would you like to come forward? State your name and address please.

Scott Rainey: Thank you very much. My name is Scott Rainey; I live in Lafayette. My question is really about transportation. If I hunt in Texas I have to be able to prove the sex of the deer that I'm transporting through Texas. A tag by itself is not considered adequate proof; I have to have the skull of the deer. If I cannot carry the skull, how do I comply with laws to transport that animal?

Mr. Johnathan Bordelon: Thank you. And that's a very great question. Very valid, something we've even discussed and was brought up our enforcement section. Within that provision there are certain exceptions. One of the exceptions obviously is the clean skull cap. So you can have the head, you can have the skull cap, you can have the antler, you're just not going to be able to possess the brain, the spinal column, the bone tissue. The only bone exception obviously would be the skull itself. So you would be able to possess a clean skull or a clean skull cap or antlers but you will not be able to possess as this proposal has been mentioned in this form, you will not be able to possess the head intact.

Scott Rainey: Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: You have a public comment? I'll let you up this time. Next time we need to make sure we fill out cards but, no, come on up. Come on up. State your name and address please. Public participation is always very important. We appreciate you all coming, we just got to keep some order going.

Steve Leonard: I understand Mr. Chairman. Steve Leonard, Clinton, Louisiana. I killed my first bull elk last year in Colorado. And do it on my own. That's problematic to get

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the brains out of that thing if I want to mount that animal and I wish, I hope we can think through this is all I ask. Just to think through this thing. There's going to be some issues of getting stuff back into the state. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you for your comment and I think that's what the NOI process is about is to encourage more comment and to fully vet the motion and to see if there could use amendment or further thought. Hearing no further public comment, motion is on the table by Commissioner Courville with a second by Commissioner Hogan to approve this NOI. All in favor?

All: I.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any opposed? Hearing no opposition motion passes. Agenda Item No. 12 to consider a notice of intent to prohibit commercial harvest of blue crabs during the 30-day period for the years 2017 through 2019; and restrict the commercial harvest of immature female blue crabs for the years 2017 through 2019. Presenting is biologist Jeff Marx.

Jeff Marx: Thank you Mr. Chairman and Commissioners for some of your time this morning. I'm here to present you guys with a notice of intent for blue crab seasonal closure and some restrictions on harvest of immature females. Basically the problem our 2016 stock assessments completed earlier this year, the data was through the year 2015 so it's the most recent we can get. We were very close to the over fishing benchmark established by the department and we had basically crossed an over fish benchmark. So, just a little visual of what that looks like. The last dot on the right, the top is your fishing mortality. That's how

many we are removing, how many fish or crabs in this case are being removed; that's your fish immortality. The red lines on both graphs are limits. That's a place you do not want to cross. The yellow lines are our tags; we're okay with bouncing around those lines. For the fish immortality you can see there in the 90s, there was hovering around that what would be our targets for fish immortality. If you look at the bottom graph that is the exploitable biomass; that's how many individuals are out there. That's the millions of pounds of fish out there. We unfortunately crossed our limit in 2015. The red line, that limit comes from the three lowest years, of biomass that we have seen, and we have seen recovery past that. So it's not panic mode but it is something we are concerned about. We don't want to dip down there too low and then have irreversible effects of any kind. And that's that point right there. That's bad. So the policies that we have in place right now. So, I guess 3 or 4 years ago when dealing with our sustainability, blue crab sustainability, we had a policy in act that said should the fish immortality or exploitable biomass exceed the over fish or over-fishing limits. Okay, well, check box No. 1. LDWF will bring to the Commission a series of management options for the commissioners to review and act upon. So, basically those options are for review are going to include provisions for emergency closures, time-based closures, spatial closures, closure basically. The authority that the Commission has to do this is in 56:6, it says that we have the rules and regulations as long as we go through the administrative procedures act, set seasons, times, places, size limits, quotas, daily take and possession limits based upon biological and technical data. So, the management actions that we are recommending in this notice of intent; basically there will be a

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closure of the commercial and trap fishery for 30 days beginning on the third Monday in February. I'll get to that in a second, I'll cover why we went with the third Monday. That when we say commercial harvest that means crab traps, which means trawls, basically no harvest, no commercial harvest of blue crabs for that 30 days. We also said the reason with closure of the trap fishery is so that recreational traps have to be removed from the water as well as commercial traps. The second management option that we are presenting to you is the restriction on immature female harvest. Basically you wouldn't be allowed to harvest an immature female blue crab unless it was for the soft shell production basically. It wouldn't be allowed to be sold in the hard crab fishery. Now both of these actions are for three years 2017, 2018, 2019. It's the sunset basically, the input we got from the crab task force from talking to other folks, was that they would like to see a sunset on these provisions and then we can come back and then evaluate what has or hasn't happened as a result of these actions. So what we will be looking at for the effects of a closure. It's a little hard to say but if we look at the last three years average landings has been around 41 million pounds. A 30-day closure basically is looking at a 3 percent immediate reduction in landings or about 1.2 million pounds. Now, that is not exactly true; it's not like if we don't catch those crabs in that 30 days that we won't catch them after the closure is over with. You will probably have an improved product if the crabs are not harvested at that time they have a chance to grow, get bigger; you'll basically increase the yield per recruit in that thing but they're not unavailable basically is what I'm trying to get at. Just because we say we're going to close for 30 days and that 1.2 million pounds harvested is gone basically, it's not really gone. It may be harvested later. But

it gives those animals a chance to escape. Now, why we went with the third Monday. It's easier to remember than trying to go with trying to rotate a date around, trying to worry about when Ash Wednesday is, when Lent is, so basically, here's a graph or a table that depicts when Ash Wednesday would be and get how many Lent fishing days there are basically on the right-hand side. You know, in those occurrences in 2017 to 2019 when Ash Wednesday doesn't start 'till March you're really only looking at a couple of weeks in March where you're unable to harvest. 2018, unfortunately it looks like Ash Wednesday's very early, it's on Valentine's Day, February 14 but there are still 17 fishing days within Lent there. Now, of course, within the regulations that we have in place already, the department has the authority through the Commission to close, for a 16-day consecutive period, any time between February 1 and March 31 for derelict crab trap cleanups. And at that point we are actually able to remove traps, during that period, that 16 day period. So what would some effects be from the immature female harvest? Basically it's some of the numbers that we've looked at through our bycatch studies, things like that, is that approximately reduced landings 5 percent, or 2 million pounds; this isn't going to have an effect on busters, peelers that the soft shell industry is still allowed to harvest them just like they are at this point for undersized crabs. You know, if you can have an allowance of that if it's white line or later in the soft shell process. Crabs would still be available. Again, it's not like these immature crabs won't ever become mature female crabs. They will eventually get to maturity. The thing is that we're allowing them a greater chance to get to maturity and to perhaps get offshore and become a little harder to get and get contribute to our spawning stock of female blue crabs. That's

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the quick, the dirty there of what you have before you, but, if you have any questions I'd be glad to take them.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any questions or discussion?

Commissioner Courville: Mr. Chairman –

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Courville.

Commissioner Courville: If we could, maybe we could hear from the public in advance. I think we have a lot of people who want to comment.

Chairman Yakupzack: I've got three comment cards.

Commissioner Courville: Let's hear from those guys and then give them another opportunity after, if we decide to move forward on that.

Chairman Yakupzack: I'm happy to offer public comment before a motion is made. First card I have here, would like to speak, in person, indicates that they are against the proposal, Mr. Whitney Curole, you want to come forward? Please, state your name and address.

Whitney Curole: Yes, my name is Whitney Curole, 245 Highway 631, Des Allemands, Louisiana. Alright, I'm just against it, man, and the reason I'm against it is I started fishing when I was a kid man, and now I buy crabs, I box crabs, I also have a retail business in Baton Rouge and, closing at 30 days would put a real lick on me. I have, right now I have eight people employed and, I mean, I don't really know, I guess that would put us all in the unemployment line, you know. As far as the virgin female crabs,

we've caught them our whole life and, you say that's not going to change anything because it's good for the busters, but required, and when you get checked by wildlife and fisheries in the boat, it's got to, there's got to be more busters on the box. And, I mean, you know, to be in reality with the law, you could put 20 boxes in your boat, write busters on them, and they could be legal. I've been stopped many times by Wildlife and Fisheries and they don't actually know what a buster is. So, I mean, you could put 20 crates on the boat that say busters on it and legally still be good with the law that they're proposing. I'm just against it, I'm against closing the season; it would hurt my business out and I'm against taking the female, not taking, closing the female crabs also.

Chairman Yakupzack: Okay. Thank you for your comment.

Whitney Curole: Yes sir.

Chairman Yakupzack: Next comment card is Mr. George Jackson. Please state your name and address. We're going to take a second during this pause to remind everyone if you wish to speak on any of these remaining items, and please fill out a white card and get it Ms. Wendy over here at the end of the table. Thank you. Mr. Jackson.

Mr. George Jackson: George Jackson, 618 Floresaint, St. Bernard Parish. I'm for getting rid of the maiden crab, but I'm against the closure because I think it's going to hurt the industry; because, they're going to go look somewhere else for product, while its closed, it's going to fall in the Lent season, and, that, and I was for closing it at a different time of the year but I don't think they want it that way. Like right now, the prices of the crabs is going down. I figured

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it would have been better for September and October but they don't feel like its better this time of the year. And that's about all I got to say about it.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you Mr. Jackson. A final comment card, from the representing Louisiana Crab Task Force, Mr. Pete Gerica. Gerica, I'm sorry. You're handwriting's about like mine.

Mr. Pete Gerica: Yes. Yeah, Pete Gerica, New Orleans, Louisiana. I been fishing for my whole life. I'm 63 years old. The task force, you know, we talked about things that we have to do and we all see that there's something has to be done. I mean, you know, when you get to a point where you got so many traps in the water, because that seemed to be the answer to getting more crabs is not producing more crabs but putting more traps in the water and just clean out what you got. So that's why we're in a problem we in right now. So, you know, we had a couple of votes on the thing and it was always like, you know, 7 to 4, and then maybe 2 abstained or 1 abstained. So, I mean, it seems to be we have to start somewhere, this is the best place to start it; we're only going to do it for three years with a sunset. My experience is whenever we had closures that was nature closes, like with Hurricane Katrina and any of the storms, if you laid off of them for a month or so, you always came back with better production. I mean, it's just common sense. If you get another month of growth you're going to make more money because you have more pounds there. So, I appreciate everybody voting' for it.

Commissioner Bobby Samanie: Of course if, Mr. Gerica, were there any other options that y'all looked at while on the crab task force and what were they?

Pete Gerica: We've been looking' at different things. I mean, you know, everybody'd like to see less traps in the water but we haven't come up with a concrete way of doing that. I mean, you know, how's enforcement do it, how do you, how do you know what, how many traps a man has in the water? We talked to people from Virginia and other places and they really haven't got a handle on, you know, how do you limit the number of traps in the water. We also talked about changing sizes. If you moved up to 5 1/2-inch crab, you'd probably get a lot-better yield, you know? Now some people say it would be bad for the picking houses but I know pickers in Alabama and, you know, throughout the different areas that they have pickers and, you know, they want a better yield. I mean, you know, if they can get a better yield out of the crab, they can get a better price for them, you know? So, you know, we need to do something and there's just so many options we have that we can take at this time. You know, nobody's in favor of limiting people, you know, so if you're not limiting the people, you're not limiting the traps, you've got to limit some time. It's the only way I know how to manage the system.

Chairman Yakupzack: Okay, thank you.

Pete Gerica: Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any other questions? Discussion? Commissioner Sunseri?

Commissioner Al Sunseri: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to move this favorably.

Chairman Bart Yakupzack: Motion to approve the notice of intent as proposed by Mr. Marx?

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Commissioner Courville: Second.

Chairman Yakupzack: A second by Commissioner Courville. Note that the motion was by Commissioner Sunseri. We held public comment first. Is there any additional public comment? Seeing none, all those in favor?

Commissioner Al Sunseri: Mr. Chairman, if I just may say, I, have difficulty with limiting you know, putting so many years on it. And I understand it, the task, the crab task force went through this. There's a lot of people that, that had opportunities to talk. The vote was, you know, almost, unanimous, and with it being that, that said, I, you know, I just feel that there's been a lot of scrutiny over this situation and, and something needs to be done according to those people within the industry. So, I just wanted to make that clear to the public out here as well as to the commissioners and the department. I got concerns about 3 years. I'd rather see less than that but, this is what they chose to do. So, I'd like to move that favorably. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. The motion is, is, is made and seconded. All those in favor?

All Commissioners: Aye.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any opposed? Hearing no opposition, motion carries.

Mr. Jeff Marx: Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Agenda item Number 13, to hear a presentation on information relating to the management of red snapper and related costs. Presenting is assistant secretary Mr. Patrick Banks.

Mr. Patrick Banks: Thank you, thank you Mr. Chairman. Appreciate the opportunity. This is the first time I've been able to address the Commission since I was put into this position and I'll tell you, it's been an interesting 5 months. And if I look older, it's because I am. What you guys requested that we provide some information this past Friday on the, the related costs of red snapper management in the gulf. Certainly this has been a big topic of conversation for quite some time; several proposals for regional management for red snapper to be given to the states. Over the years it, it hadn't seemed to make it through either Congress or the Gulf Council so far. And we're still pressing forward with trying to do something for regional management at the council level. And, apparently that has, certainly had the topic back in front of everybody and, and back on everybody's radar. And so I appreciate the off, the opportunity to come and give you some of the, the cost-related information that we feel would be necessary if the authority for red snapper management came to the state and would remove federal funding from that equation. So these costs have to do with, with the state management of that species with no involvement from the federal government whatsoever. So when you manage a species, as y'all well know, it's not just about one piece of the management pie, which is any number of those listed above. We certainly have Fisheries-dependent data that must be collected when we manage a species. And the La Creel program that's in place right now is a fully funded program. It was funded through an act of the legislature a few years ago, to increase the salt water license fees by \$7.50 and that generated all the money we need to run La Creel. Now La Creel is a Fisheries-dependent piece of data that's collected for on our charter for hire as well as our private anglers. That's

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not how we collect Fisheries-dependent data on commercial catches. So we would have, that would be another piece of Fisheries-dependent data that we would have to fund. And we do that through the trip ticket program and that's funded through the federal government. Our other piece of information that we would need from a management stand point in order to manage a species, any species including red snapper, would be our Fisheries-independent data. So think about your scientific sampling that it takes. When we go out and sample the, the animals in the, in the nature; determine sizes, determine the reproductive ability of those animals sample different habitats; try to get a biomass estimate basically, the number of fish that're in the water. An, another big part of, of this particular species management that's performed by the federal government, is an understanding of juvenile mortality that's created through our shrimp trawl fishery. So we would have to replace that sampling as well, as part of our in, independent sampling and have to perform shrimp trawl by-catch studies. And that's a big part of, of that Fisheries-independent cost estimate of the \$6 million. Of course all this data comes in. Right now all of that data comes in and is, and is managed by the federal government. We collect some of it for them but we send it to them, they manage it. We would, we would take over management of all of that, and we have an estimate, estimated cost for that in Year 1. Another big thing that the federal government does is, they have a stock assessment team that, that does stock assessments on red snapper, grouper, and all, all different kinds of species. We would have to have a team to do that as well. So it, it takes a team of scientists, you know, a lot of time and effort to work on a stock assessment, a true stock assessment of fin fish. And so we estimate about \$300,000.00

there for the stock assessment team to work on all of this data. And then of course we have some administrative support functions that would be required and so we're looking at a biological total of about \$9 million in Year 1, if you add enforcement in there, which was estimated at about a million dollars to enforce out to 200 miles, you're looking at an overall Year 1 cost of about \$10 million. Now certainly in Years 2 through 5, that cost will be lowered. We're, would anticipate only needing to do a stock assessment every 3 to 5 years. We're, we're estimating every 5 years right here as, as the bare minimum. So a large portion of the fisheries-independent data collection would not have to be done in those interim years, but then it would have to be repeated in, in Year 6. So, yeah, this is the Year 1 cost. Just recognize that in Years 2 through 5, it'll be a little-bit less and that's the estimate that we came up with over the last, whatever, 72 hours since you guys instructed us to, to put this information together. And I'll be happy to answer any questions before we move on to the next portion of the presentation.

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Sunseri?

Chairman Sunseri: You said this is Year 1. What would 2 and 3; have y'all gone that far – to see what that would be?

Mr. Banks: Yeah, year, Year 2 would end, end up being about, well in the biological, now enforcement is the same no matter, no matter what –

Chairman Sunseri: Right.

Mr. Banks: – year it is. But biological total, we would be down in about the \$4 million range on Years 2 through 5.

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Chairman Sunseri: Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Courville?

Commissioner Courville: Mr. Chairman, in the spirit of what we did on the last agenda item, perhaps we have some people in the public who want –

Chairman Yakupzack: OK.

Commissioner Courville: – to comment on this or are we not there yet?

Chairman Yakupzack: Well, –

Chairman Yakupzack: Yeah, he's not quite done with his presentation.

Chairman Yakupzack: Okay.

Commissioner Courville: Well then I have, in, in that regard then, I do have a couple of questions.

Chairman Yakupzack: Okay.

Commissioner Courville: how much do the feds spend now on this issue? Do we have a handle on it? Is it 10-point –

Mr. Banks: I, –

Commissioner Courville: – something' million?

Mr. Banks: – I do not

Commissioner Courville: Do you have a sense on what it costs them?

Mr. Banks: No, unfortunately, I don't have an idea of what they spend. They, they send

a boat out and they sample all species, of course, and red snapper being one of them. Or they hire us to go out and say, and sample all species, red snapper being one of them. So I don't know that they know how much they would spend on just red snapper if they just had to do red snapper. Certainly the bill that's before Congress right now does not have a CBO score; that would be very helpful for us to know what, what they would spend on managing just red snapper but unfortunately we don't have that estimate right now.

Commissioner Courville: Is it, is it safe to assume that in the event this were to come down and, and be our responsibility that the feds are going continue to sample everything else that they're currently sampling though, correct?

Mr. Banks: As I understand from, from speaking with them, they would still send their ships out to go and, and sample way offshore like they're –

Commissioner Courville: They just close –

Mr. Banks: they're doing now.

Commissioner Courville: their eyes when they saw snapper.

Mr. Banks: That's, that's the best guess they can give me.

Mr. Banks: And, and they – and so they would not be able to provide us any of that information.

Commissioner Courville: You mentioned the shrimp trawl by-catch, I assume they're not only looking at snapper during that effort, is, is that, is that a fair assessment?

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Mr. Banks: That's right, they're –

Commissioner Courville: So –

Mr. Banks: – they're –

Commissioner Courville: – is it safe to assume they would continue to collect that data?

Mr. Banks: Our hope would be that they would collect that and we could request it.

Commissioner Courville: But under a Freedom of Information Act.

Mr. Banks: Right, and say, "Well, we're not going to use it for snapper so that we could still get it" and they wouldn't, they wouldn't be violating the, the, you know, no funds are spent on snapper mandate, you know, and so, you know, but we can't, we can't assume that at this point so that's why that \$6.4 million includes if we had to go out and do that shrimp survey ourselves.

Commissioner Courville: Okay, and then, I think maybe my last question is, do we have a, a, a sense for how much we currently spend, managing snapper out to 9 miles in our current budget?

Mr. Banks: In our current budget we spent – what'd we do for snapper right now is Fisheries dependent data through La Creel and, and that's –

Commissioner Courville: So we're spending about 1.8 million.

Mr. Banks: Well, 1.7 is what we've spent on La Creel in this past fiscal year.

Commissioner Courville: But –

Mr. Banks: So remember that Fisheries dependent is La Creel and, and other Fisheries dependent data collections which brings it up to 1.8.

Commissioner Courville: And we're not doing any data management, I would assume the administrative support would be somewhat similar although expanded and then we're obviously enforcing it too, so, but we don't, is that sort of all in there, uh? The, I guess where I'm going with it, Patrick, and you know what it is, is how much incremental money are we sort of considering and maybe we're not there yet, uh –

Mr. Banks: Well, a, a lot of this would be – now I can't speak for enforcement – but a lot of this would be extra work that we would have to do. For example, Fisheries independent data collection, if we can't get that data from the federal government, we have to hire a ship, put our people onboard and we have to go out and take that data, and we have to bring it back and we have to crunch it, we have to analyze it. So, you know, that's, that's new efforts that we would have to put together to go and do that, that work if we had to do a, a, a brand new stock assessment.

Commissioner Courville: okay, but, I mean, anybody can ask anybody for anything these days –

Mr. Banks: Yeah well maybe so –

Commissioner Courville: – unless we've switched our form of government to some other form outside of democracy, it, and it'd be nice to know what, what they spend if we can figure that out at some point.

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Mr. Banks: Yeah, that, we, we're hoping to have a, a CBO score of the bill which would help us understand that.

Commissioner Courville: Um –

Chairman Yakupzack: 'Cause –

Commissioner Courville: – and, and just to clarify, you, you sort of, obviously you've been working to develop these numbers, but you mentioned that you had about, you've sort of settled on this in the most, in about 72 hours plus or minus?

Mr. Banks: Right and that, which was a group of about five people working almost around the clock trying to put this all together. Lots of conversations amongst staff, amongst different sections of our Fisheries on how much it costs to go offshore, how much work we do, calls to the feds about what they do, how they do it, what we would have to replace, things like that, so it was a –

Commissioner Courville: Okay.

Mr. Banks: – it was a –

Commissioner Courville: Okay, thanks.

Mr. Banks: – a large effort.

Commissioner Courville: That's all I have for now.

Chairman Yakupzack: Yeah and I'll, I know you – got a thick packet here and you got plenty of present, presenting to do, you got more to talk about but just since that's come up now three times about the 72 hours, I think it's important to recognize for this commission that the questions about related costs started on the, the 21<sup>st</sup> when the

Commission, the Commission, no, I began receiving calls from commissioners on that day and so thank you very much for working very hard over the last 72 hours to prepare this for presentation, but we, we, we've, this has all been a topic for now nearly 3 weeks and, and to, to receive the agenda on Thursday and for it not to have a presentation of any sort about this was a little surprising and I got call after call from, from these guys saying we weren't going to hear about this and so that's why at their request the agenda it was add, was, item was added. So, I certainly appreciate your hard work and sorry that your, your holiday was, was compromised but I do want to, did want to recognize that point.

Mr. Banks: Well I, I'll tell you, my holiday was not compromised, thank goodness, but you're, you're right, we, we have been talking about calls for several weeks now and we were able to put together a rough cost estimate several weeks ago but this, to present it to you guys, we knew we had to have every bit of meat on the bone that we could possibly get at this time and, and that's the difference between the general cost back-of-the-napkin type effort we did a few weeks ago and this one and, you know, I knew that y'all would have a lot more questions at this point.

Secretary Melancon: Yeah, and, and if I might, um –

Chairman Yakupzack: Secretary.

Secretary Melancon:– back on the 20<sup>th</sup> we had put some rough cost estimates but everyone kept challenging our cost estimates, so we finally after asking the, finance and management group to try to give us numbers, they kept trying to figure out where they were coded, where they came

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from, what the actual numbers were, we came to the conclusion that we weren't really going to have solid numbers to give you or didn't really have, other than "we think this is what it is", so it wasn't that it just got put together in 72 hours ago, it was , because we didn't want to come here and have questioned the numbers that we had, we wanted to try and give you something that we thought we could basically put out solid and say "here's the numbers", so.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you.

Mr. McClinton: Chairman, commissioners, Bryan McClinton, Undersecretary Wildlife and Fisheries, I was asked part of this presentation to kinda give a, a fiscal update on, as part of this, on the cost and how it impacted the department. A couple of you have, have, we've discussed this in the past so this is not going to be new information to everybody but I'm talking about the conservation fund. The conservation fund is the largest funding source at 63 percent of kinda the department's expenditures, it's what can be expended that, that doesn't have a statutory dedicated or a federal nexus on it to where it, it has to be spent on certain things so that's the majority of enforcement, the majority if anything doesn't fit within something else, so it, the, the assumption is without, the federal dollars, that's where the brunt of it, the additional costs that would come in would, would impact the conservation fund – and I'm trying to see how I get this thing to scroll, sorry. This is a very brief projection of the conservation fund. You'll see 15/16 still projected; that's , because we're still receiving invoices and some of those are grant related, we'll draw that federal dollars down so revenues may go up, expenditures may go up, that's kinda where we're at right now. You can see as we project out, I'm currently projecting and -

, when you see your presentation to me for the new commissioners, always do this as well, at 20-21, we look like we're going to be needing general fund to exist which is a 4-year, 4-year out projection. So, and the question, also I'd like to know, I'm on this page at bottom, is reductions that have occurred, usually mid-year budget reductions , because the state's at a deficit and they're allowed to take 5 percent of our statutory dedicated funding so that's what some of those reductions are at the bottom. You can see, I'm not projecting any of that but I'm going to address it a little bit later. The, this is the conservation revenue. The top line is total department, the total revenue within the conservation fund. That secondary line that's right below it that has a very similar shape is our mineral revenue. The third line down is recreational hunting and fishing licenses. The bottom two lines are commercial and fishing licenses. The majority, please note the majority of that funding goes to commercial, to commercial interested, statutory dedications, that's why there's not a huge amount that goes to the conservation fund and the other is boat registration and other permits and things that are sold. The reason I wanted to show you this to show how dependent we are on a mineral revenue and one of the reasons that we're currently in the situation we're in, that you say "well I haven't heard about this", prior to that is the \$35 million cut we've taken from last year, year-end and, again, I know we're still projected but we're pretty close to where we're going to be revenue-wise this year, it's about a \$35 million less in revenue on mineral, mineral royalties that are generated on a WMA. you couple that with these are the, the reductions that we've had from the last 8 years, these are mid-year budget reductions or fund sweeps or us purchasing different things and we've, that we've been, through different, either acts or,

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or executive orders, if they've given up about \$15 million in conservation fund. there's also some other obligations for the past several years we've been funding the \*\*\*\* libation program at DNR, we've been giving the mineral board at DNR to collect our mineral revenues; we've never done that in the past but twice we now, we've, we've supported them, you can see that's a little over \$2 million and then we've had our, a lot of our functions in Office of Management Finance has been consolidated first at DNR and then the division administration, that's \$7 million. If we had that in-house we would still have to pay for those functions, I'm not trying to make this look, you know, inflated that's another \$7 million but there is some cost savings because we do pay a premium we do pay an overhead which we wouldn't have if they were in-house but I just wanted to say that does add to why we're currently in the \$3 million deficit, the for 20-21. And this last slide is some, some release mineral revenue that we've, that's been collected on our behalf that we did not receive, the state hasn't given us. We, we've argued it with the entities that are involved and we've gotten some payment back but there's still 6½ million and we've been told that it's unlikely that we receive that money so I just kinda wanted to show you that, you know, the department, when we had money, we've been looked to and required to help out other agencies, help out through executive orders and things, and we, and I don't begrudge doing it but projections, I guess, my wrap up, I got a \$3 million deficit in 20-21, I got a \$35 million increase, decrease in mineral revenues from the prior year, we got additional costs. I do not have that consolidated functions in that 24 million because I didn't think that was fair, and, but we do have concerns, because the currently the state's budget's not real healthy, K through 12 is not funded, you know, some of

the hospitals aren't funded. I'm anticipating us to have to go through another mid-year reduction, they come and take another 5 percent, so I just wanted to kinda give you all an update for those who haven't seen it, on kinda where we are financially. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you.

Secretary Melancon: Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, let me start by saying that. Since I've been at the agency, I have said and I continue to say, that with regards to red snapper, my goal was to provide a larger Creel limit and more days of fishing and that still is my goal and that still what I have told the, the staff and the biologists for this agency that we want to do. If you, the man, the federal government as people say, is not managing the fisheries, the Gulf Council manages the fisheries. The Gulf Council is made up of 17 people; one is a federal official, the rest are five state directors, representatives of the commercial, recreational sport fishing and charter fishing sectors. Those 16 people are the Gulf Council. The proposal to establish a new bureaucracy to replace the Gulf Council would be additional revenue, because the feds are not going to fund it and I'll talk to that in a few minutes. The problem is that we've got citizens and stakeholders that are involved that some want it their way or no way and they can't seem to come to the realization that you got to give some. The Gulf Council saved the red snapper. Does that sound like an organization that can't do something when it wants to do it?

The red snapper, it was at about 3 percent estimated left in the Gulf of Mexico. It is now up to about 65 percent. In the last 4 years the quotas or the allotments have doubled for the different groups. Now,

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Magnuson Stevenson was put in law for a reason, because people were fighting over the fish rather than discussing how to make sure that we conserve the fish. We as an agency, the Council, NOAA, Magnuson Stevens, is all about conservation and it may not be that we're happy with the number of fish we're getting right now, and we're not, particular when you go offshore in Louisiana and you see the quantity of fish that are out there. When you go offshore in Florida and Alabama, not so, but they've got the fishermen. So, to set up a Gulf Council or a new entity still doesn't solve the problem of how you going to share the fish, it's still problematic and it's going to be problematic. If you divide it to the east and the west and you do the new proposal, there's going to be five guys running this whole thing; no public input like you allow, no stakeholders' input, it's not provided for. Five guys. So let's say Texas and Louisiana decide that we're going have our Fisheries and do whatever we want to do from the Mississippi River or from the Mississippi line going west. There's three votes on the other side that may decide they don't want to let us do that without public input, without stakeholder input, without any kind of input. So from the standpoint of are we being regulated by the feds, no, we are the Gulf Council. The five states run the Gulf Council, make the decisions, cast the votes and for some reason we can't seem to get where we want to go even though and one of the things, and I think you're going to cover some more viable about what we've done, yeah, what we've done, let me speak to, and let me go straight to my notes so I can make sure that I'm not misquoted, because there was an article that said - was written that said that Charlie Melancon was against state management of the Fisheries and that is a lie, I mean it's just blatantly not correct. I felt that the resolution passed by the

Commission in April obligated this department to pursue one of several options, only one of several options, related to a very complex and contentious issue. The resolution passed essentially prohibited myself or any of the Fisheries' management and biologists within this department from exploring all options to accomplish the goal of providing recreational anglers longer seasons and increased daily bag limits. Nevertheless, and putting aside the questions of with whom the authority lies to make decisions related to federal Fisheries' management, I respected this Commission's wishes and followed their direction. On numerous occasions I was requested to express concerns in opposition to Congressman's Graves' bill, HR 3094 and I didn't, I stayed quiet. Congressman Graves himself stated during congressional mark up on HR 3094 that this bill is endorsed by all of the Gulf states and if in fact this department or I would have opposed it, Congressman Graves would certainly not have knowingly provided false information to the committee. Two days before that vote, I received a call from a former senator that's a friend of mine who lobbies for and we didn't even get into the question who she lobbies for, but she asked what was the position of the department and I said that a position, as far as I knew, was to support the Graves bill and asked me if I was going to do anything and my comment was "no, one way or another for or against, my hands were tied, stay at home, don't get involved." That was basically as I interpreted the resolution. Chairman Bishop, however, during the congressional markup, Chairman Bishop authored and passed an amendment. That amendment was basically to gut the bill. It's a poison pill amendment. It's how chairmen that don't want something to come out will kill a bill by letting you get a bill passed out of the committee. His

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quote, "This removes any of the federal funding from the authority, one of the things I think significant." Then ranking member Grahaldia just to ratify it, and if you look, if you go to the web site, you can see this committee in action, and Representative Grahaldia, who's the ranking member says, "This amendment makes sure the states get all the responsibility but none of the federal funding, the very definition of an unfunded mandate." That was in the committee hearing. You can see that online anytime. The Wildlife and Fisheries Commission resolution should, said "Gulf States red snapper management authority should prove to, to not be viable, then the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission will work diligently in conjunction with Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Department toward a resolution for successful management of the resources for the betterment of the Fisheries. Without any federal funding associated with this mandate, along with the proposed role of the U.S. Secretary of Com, Commerce, without the new authority that would be established" – and by the way, it's a new, it's a whole new administration bureaucracy which I think most people that I know are against establishing more government, but it basically provides that there would, that U.S. Secretary of Commerce which includes NOAA, includes the Council, includes any government money would not be allowed to use the federal funding to provide to any of the states or entities of the state in the management of the red snapper. so that's where, and I'll get to how I came about making this statement actually it was about 5 days after the committee, I'd still not ever said anything and found it kinda strange that a press person from Louisiana hadn't called to say what I thought but I did get a question from a reporter out of Texas. We were on the road, we were over at the Gulf going to

the Gulf Council and this reporter, we asked him to put his question in writing so the question we received is "If asked by legislators whether Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries would favor the Garrett Graves Bill to allow for state snapper management but without federal funding how would the department respond if asked by state legislators?" My answer: "HR 3094 would transfer to the Gulf states the management authority and responsibility" – and this is after it's passed with the killer amendment – "to the states, the management authority and responsibility for scientific data collection for the red snapper resource in state and federal waters off their respective coast. However HR 3094 as recently amended by Congressman Bishop would not transfer any federal funding to the states to conduct necessary stock assessment, research data collection or enforcement. Without federal funding Louisiana could potentially lack the proper resources to manage the red snapper fishery. HR 3094 would not be a viable option for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. It would be fiscally irresponsible for the department to support any mandate that would result in the unknown amount of fish, of fiscal burden placed on the State of Louisiana for the management of a single species of fish. As a department we are charged with managing our Fisheries, our fishery resources for optimum yield and the same applies to our fiscal resources. The department is committed to re, responsibly managing our fishery resources, and we understand some of our user groups are frustrated with the current federal management of red snapper under the authority of NOAA Fisheries and the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. We remain committed to working with NOAA Fisheries, the Council and its members and all interested stakeholders to ensure optimum utilization of the fair and

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equitable access to the red snapper resources. The department's, department's good is to begin a collaborative dialogue, goal is to, to begin a collaborative dialogue with our state and federal partners to find a durable solution to these issues concerning management of the red snapper resources of, for the public good" and that was my quote. Never a word about state management where this thing got all blown out of proportion. Now, the reality, you've seen the numbers. We're facing a half a billion dollar deficit this fiscal year. There are people, old people, young people, that can't get medical treatment at the hospitals, because we've cut, had to cut the budget. K through 12 has been cut drastically. The university's got a few dollars back, but that won't even give them 1 percent of what they needed to get back. We as an agency since the day I got here have been looking at every contract, we have proposed through the process that we need to, the legislature, to reorganize this department. We found that we have a whole lot more chiefs than we had Indians, and that's not supposed to happen. There is guidelines of how you structure your organizations. So we, I think in the first 2½ months we found somewhere in the neighborhood of I think 2½ or \$3 million of much of contracts that we could go to and get out of, and basically I said we will stay with those that are needs and meet the core mission of this agency and those that we, or wants, let's go and ask, see if we can get outa those things. And we've done some of that, and there's more to be done. As you know we have been going through an audit. Consumption of time has been spent more in responding to those audit requests, than I would've liked and would've liked to have a whole lot more time in actual policy, politics, in terms of trying to make sure that we had a smoother ride on things, with, with the commission, with the

stakeholders that are out there. One of the things that I said when I got here, in the first couple of weeks, was that when I saw what was going on with the red snapper fisheries that it would behoove us to try and put all the stakeholders into a room as they do at the Gulf Council and see if we can hammer out at least in one state the differences that exist. And if that's the case, then maybe we can meld that in and get other states to sit down and do the same thing to where we can get this resolved. What I see for Mr. Graves' bill, and I served in Congress and I know what the actions are and I can tell you when a committee chairman puts a bill that takes the funding out of the bill, it is a killer amendment. It is not intended to be a friendly amendment, although I can tell you and I've been in position where the chairman says either you can bring the bill and you get it passed but I'm going put a killer amendment, whatever it's going to be, and you have that gentlemen's agreement, if you feel that you've still have to move the bill. So what I saw on that day is I believe what transpired, but the fact is if you look at the legislation, in Section 505 Prohibition on Federal Funding, no federal funding shall be appropriated or used for the GSRSM or its members to carry out management actions of red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico, period, end of sentence, next section starts. Happy to answer questions, my staff is happy to answer questions. I have never been in a position where I'm against anything. I have always tried to find resolve to an issue, and as I tell people that's the blue dog in me. That's the Billy Tauzins, the John Breauxs, the people we all know, about trying to sit down and find resolution. Some people may not want resolution, and for that I can't do anything. But as in a person that has served in public office, that is now here at the department, trying to use what skills and what, the errors I made in the past to try and

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make sure that I do a better job in the future. It's all about trying to find a resolve to an issue that has been festering for too long. But people have to talk and people have to give, and one of the things that I have learned, I learned it in a marriage. I'll be 44 years this month. If you don't give in somewhere and, and give some, then it won't work. Business deals are the same way, mitigation in lawsuits are the same way. Sometimes you have to give some to get some. So when everybody gets up from the table, if nobody is truly happy with what they've done, the chances are it's a good deal. If one side gets up happy and the other side gets up mad, then you can bet somebody came out on the short end. Now, back to where we started. Do I want and does this department want more fish in the Creel and more days to fish? The answer is absolutely emphatically yes, and it has been since the day I got here. So all the accusations, all the running around, is about one article that was written that if you look at the headlines and then you look at the first paragraph you would believe that I said that I'm not for state management. I'm for state rights, always have been. I've also always been against mandated, unfunded mandates as a public official. Voting record, you can check it if you like. That's the person I am, but I'm all about trying to find resolve. So with that, I'm happy to answer any questions, my staff is happy to answer any questions. They know, and I've told them since the day I arrived here, this is about making things better and not about stirring controversy, and I'm sorry that some people misinterpret the fact that the fiscal irresponsible thing is the easy way out. To say that the state can't afford millions and millions of dollars, this agency included, is not, I mean, that's, it is what it is. So I put that before you. If we were flushed with money we could maybe find it, but if I've

have to go find money within this department, because I doubt very seriously the legislature's going to be giving me any money. But if I got to go find money then who do I take it from, the shrimpers, the crabbers? How 'bout the duck people and the deer people? I'm going to have to rob a pot somewhere to get the money. And so I want to try and make this agency solid for as long as I'm here and further into the future after I'm gone, and that's basically what I'm going to try and do. So I thank you for the opportunity to visit with you and, be happy to answer any questions, me or the staff. I think Patrick has a little bit more information. Starting the Monday at the Gulf Council when I felt like the bill was unviable, I sat down with Patrick and Myron and we started talking about what can we do now, because I felt like I was, I had the ability to have conversations finally about do we have any options. So we wanted to try and start back up the conversations in the Gulf Council about a recreation fishing, whether it's regional, whether it's state, any options to put on the table to try and solve the problem. And we had discussions about trying to increase the limit, we may have to shrink the day, because of the quota, but increase the limit so those boats that are going offshore they can maybe get more fish, and Patrick will talk to that because that was a conversation I felt that the scientists need to have and it wasn't just for a layperson like myself to be involved. Questions, or would y'all like to let Patrick finish up?

Chairman Yakupzack: Let's hear from Patrick.

Secretary Melancon: Okay. Thank you.

Commissioner Courville: Thank you.

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Audience: Applause

Mr. Banks: I don't have any more of a presentation. We all prepared to present some information about the state red snapper season to you all, and it would give you an idea of how many fish have been harvested so far, how many, how much longer we think we can leave that open, maybe is there some opportunity in the future possibly to request an increase in bag limit, things of that sort. I would recommend that you allow us to give that presentation so that you know where we stand in terms of the season and how many fish have been caught, and then we can get into more in-depth questions, but I'll follow your lead.

Commissioner Courville: Mr. Chair –

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Courville?

Commissioner Courville: I was thinking you were going to talk about something else. So if you would oblige me, I've got a couple of questions and I appreciate the clarification by Secretary Melancon, so I'll direct this at whoever wants to take a stab at it. I thought you were going to talk about the amendment that was moved forward at the Gulf Council meeting and –

Mr. Banks: I can if you would like.

Commissioner Courville: Yeah. I read it and I'd like somebody to explain to me what I just read.

Mr. Banks: Yeah. Well, it's a little bit difficult to explain, because it was a lengthy debate.

Commissioner Sunseri: Wait.

Mr. Banks: Sorry.

Commissioner Sunseri: I need to hear the amendment.

Commissioner Courville: Okay. You have it?

Mr. Banks: I don't have it in front of me.

Commissioner Courville: Should I just read the little excerpt I have? “Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council motion introduced by council member Patrick Banks on behalf of the State of Louisiana June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. Motion to direct staff to create a new amendment for management of red snapper for the private recreational fishery in the Gulf of Mexico considering all options including regional management with input from the ad hoc private recreational advisory panel. Motion carried by a vote of 9 to 6 with one abstention.” What does that mean?

Mr. Banks: Well, I'll do my best to explain it. As Secretary Melancon indicated when the funding issue became a concern we got together and said how can we do what the Commission ask us to do if we don't believe this is the red snapper authority is going to be viable. So how can we still move down that road and try to do what the Commission wanted us to do? And at that point we felt like there was no way we could bring back full regional management in front of the council. That which clearly didn't work before. So we said well, why we don't try to start looking at just the private recreational anglers and see if we can get a regional management approach or some sort of a framework for that type of management through the council as a starting point to try to do what you guys wanted us to do. So my thought was well, the commercial side of the

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council has always been very skeptical of us, so I need to do what I need to do with them to try to convince them that we're not trying to pull anything over on them. So I talked to each of them, talked to them about what we're trying to do, what we're hoping to do, that we were not trying to change the management process for the commercial sector. We were not trying to change the management process for the charter for hire sector. This was strictly for recreational private angling only. And after a lot of conversations we got a lot of support. Unfortunately, we didn't get the support of the recreational members or three of the other four Gulf state directors. But that amendment, the original motion, was to develop a new amendment to develop regional management for the private recreational angling community. That was the original motion. A lot of discussion took place at the council. One of the other state directors was concerned about the context of regional management, I can't remember all what she said, but I offered to change the wording of the motion, and then another comment maybe from another director, I can't remember, wanted to make sure that we waited until we got input from this ad hoc, private recreational advisory panel that was being put together. I said fine, we want input from everybody, you know? Certainly input is not bad. And I welcome from that group, from any group. So that's how the motion got changed up and got somewhat confusing in the end, but the gist of the motion is to try to get an amendment started through the council to develop a regional management plan or some other management framework for the private recreational community.

Commissioner Courville: Okay. So based on that, what gives us any sense that all of a sudden they've developed an interest in

doing this when it doesn't appear, and granted I'm reasonably new coming into this deal, but they've had a lot of interest in that in the past. Why all of a sudden, why the change –

Mr. Banks: Yeah.

Chairman Courville: – of heart? That's -.

Mr. Banks: It's a valid question and I'm, and I'm new to the process as well and, and the other state directors told me I was being naïve. But all I heard at the council for the two meetings that I've been there is this council can do nothing, we can get nothing accomplished here. Everybody seemed frustrated, but yet nobody wants to stand up and actually do anything. This I felt moved us down the road. I mean, how, how can we, if we're just going to sit there and not take a step forward, because we don't believe that we can walk, well, then we will never try. And so, so I felt like that we got a lot of support for trying to move this down the road. Unfortunately, and it was somewhat surprising to me that the recreational community did not support it. They, they, they wanted us to go about it a different way, and that's something that we're going to talk to you about in a minute you know, the season and trying to increase bag limits But, but we got a lot of support at the council. I mean, it said 9 to 6, it was actually a 10 to 6 vote. I mean, that's, that's unheard of from what I've been told at the council. Everything that's controversial is 9 to 8. You know, it either passes unanimously or it's 9 to 8. The fact that we got ten votes to push this forward, people are telling me that we've got a new, a new feeling at the council that Louisiana's work, is working again with the feds, working again with the majority of the council, and it, it just feels like to me we can make some

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progress. Now, this new amendment may, may come through the council and it may be something that we can't, we can't support in the end, and that's very possible. I think that's what happened to Amendment 39. I think the previous administration moved that forward and it was a very good amendment to start with, but in the end it just got to a, a spot that they just couldn't support in the end and they, they voted along with other state directors to table it or postpone it indefinitely or whatever, and that may happen in this amendment. And you're, you're right, Commissioner, we, we may be in the same spot, but to say we're not going to try ever again I just don't, I don't, I don't see how we can do for you guys what, what we're asked to do and push forward with regional management if we just sit on our hands. So, you know, if that's not the way y'all want us to do I, I'll gladly, you know, take your all's lead and Secretary Melancon's lead, but I feel like that we just had to do something and we got a lot of strong support.

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Sunseri.

Commissioner Sunseri: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, you know, I'm a solutions-type person and you know, you know this Patrick, a lot of people, you know, in the audience know me as well. And it's, you try to come together so that you can meet a happy medium and no one ever gets what they want but you have to come to a solution. If you don't, you always have this back and forth, back and forth, and that is not going, that is not a successful way to own any show. I mean, I'm a businessman and there's a lot of hard decisions I've had to make as a businessman, especially over these last 6 years since the deep water horizon disaster, and a lot of them were

good, they're fun, but you know, it was what needed to be done to be able to make it work. So I'm hopeful no matter what goes on that we look at this in a solution manner trying to, to fix whatever's wrong. I don't know what's wrong, you know, but I'm looking forward to learning what, what the issues are on, on this, and hopefully we can, you know, reach some kinda solution to whatever management issues we got. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Commissioner Courville: Mr. Chairman, I'm Commissioner Courville. I have a follow-up question, and it may be better directed at Secretary Melancon, but I'll let whoever wants to dive into it give it a shot. Based on, on the secretary's comments earlier, do we have more faith that the resolution to this issue lies in the Gulf Council or in state-based management?

Secretary Melancon: Well, what we put into the amendment – an amendment is basically a bill in the council lingo – what we've put in there is that we put all options on the table and have the open discussion. If it's state management, if it's regional management, if it's gulf-wide management. I still have a problem trying to, to figure out, and I think I've told you this before, we've got biomass in Louisiana. They don't have the biomass over in Florida and Alabama but they damn well have more fishermen than we'll ever have. So the problem is how you get the fish from the bi, in the biomass state to the fish in the fishermen's state. It doesn't change it no matter where you're trying to make the deal. You still have the same problem. But to take it and put it in a bureaucracy that's got five people who are not elected. Appointed. That would be one would be me. Do you want to entrust five people that you don't know with no public input, no stakeholder input to make

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decisions on the life of the fish that we want to preserve and conserve for not just, you know, this generation but others?

Look, I remember when we went to three-duck limit and I know that, that, that the hunter right there, Mr. Courville, understands ducks. There was some very angry people in this state, but you know at the time, Ducks Unlimited had a lot, had biologist and scientists and our state agency biologists and scientists and U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologists and scientists says you need to do it. It has to be done if we're going to conserve. If we're going to make sure that there's going be ducks for the future. So everybody pulled together and did it. Now right now, and I'm not going to get into the biology, but there's a whole lot more fish probably being thrown back into the, into the gulf rather than taken in, because their bladder has come out that can be brought home or should be brought home and the council should address those culled fish and should try and find some ways to find a solution to it. It's a matter of having the guts to sit down and have an honest conversation about it. What I found about the council and I tried to get a person appointed to that at-large seat. I was unsuccessful. I thought I had a good shot at it. But as I told the people with NOAA and the people with the Department of Commerce, when I talked with them about giving Louisiana that, that at-large seat, that I found that's what happening at the council is that you've got round pegs, square pegs and triangle pegs. If you ever had a peg board, you know what I'm talking about. And what happens is as soon as it gets controversial, every peg goes to their appropriate holes and sit there and they don't do a thing. Which means they lock up. But it's not the feds. It's the people from the five states. They partner up, they lock up and

make deals. I don't know. One thing that I told the guys that sit for Louisiana when they asked what I wanted them to do, I've told them all. I want you to do the right thing. We are the people that are responsible for the conservation of this species and every other species. And what you need to do is make sure that whatever we're doing is for the best interest of the species so that we will have the enjoyment and pleasure of them into the future, so our children and our grandchildren have them. We may have to pay the price in the short term by being limited by what we can catch. And I know that's frustrating. But there's been things that've been established in law, in the council, by rule, been through the court cases, have been fought out. The rec sector is the only sector, the rec to private sector is the only sector that hasn't resolved its problem. The commercial has an allotment. They know how they can fish, when they can fish, where they can fish. The charter people the same thing. Like it or not, they've got it. It's done. So do we start dismantling legs that are working already to fix one that isn't working yet? No. We got to be able to figure it out. And remember, in 4 – what is it – 4 years, I think we've doubled the quota that's been allowed for the Fisheries, for the entire Fisheries of red snapper. I think our bigger issues are going to be about who, how you get those fish from where they are in Louisiana to other places.

Mr. Banks: Commissioner Courville, I'll, I'll try to answer as best I can your question. Do I believe the, the congressional act is –

Commissioner Courville: That's my question.

Mr. Banks: – State's management or do I think the council's - the answers. I don't

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know which one. But, and that's why I think it's critical that we, we operate with as many options on the table as we can. You know, I don't know a lot about politics. Thank goodness Secretary Melancon does. But, but when I hear things about Congress and, and the difficulty of getting a bill through and certainly in an election year, I, I look at that and say we need to be, we need to be working another option, you know, as best we can. And it doesn't mean that we're, we don't think that's a good option. That's a good road that'll get us, get us to the finish line. This is a road that we need to explore to see if it gets to the finish line and whatever other option we can come up with at this point. And so, that's the short is I don't know which one is the best option but I feel like, because of that, we have to explore them all.

Commissioner Courville: Well, then let me rephrase my question. Do we have a sense that we are exploring them all, because I, you know, in, in my judgment, you know, I've seen your budget and I appreciate as, as Bart mentioned, Commissioner Yakupzack mentioned, I, there's, that, that big Fisheries' independent data thing that's out there that we think might or might not be done, that changes the game a lot. That's a big component to this, this budget, and without knowing if we can get that I think I agree. All options are on the table. Me, personally, I sure would love to hear and I intend to attend a gulf council meeting to find out if we can get a sense that these guys have had a change of heart. However, call me cynical, call me whatever you want it, I – let me back up. So is it fair to say, based on, on the comments heard here today, that we're putting a little bit more faith in the gulf council route than, any other route? Is that, is that a fair statement?

Mr. Banks: I don't think that's a fair statement. I don't know how much faith to put into either one of them, Commissioner Courville. The thing is to sit back, we just felt like, we were sitting at the council a couple weeks ago and to sit back and put all our faith in, in one route when it looks sort of bad, we felt like we needed to start forging another route. And, so that we had that option on the table as well. And if, and if the congressional instrument makes it, then we're set. We can, we can withdraw that amendment from the gulf council and, we won't need to do anything, thing else. But, you know, I don't have a good sense of which one is, is preferred.

Commissioner Courville: Sure.

Mr. Banks: I will say that the gulf council has been in operation for a long time. And it's done good work. Now, yeah, it's not perfect, just like anybody's not perfect. And we may disagree with how many days we get and I'm not happy with that either. But the fact is, that council, the man, the management scheme that it's utilized, has brought a fish back from the brink.

Commissioner Courville: Sure. Absolutely.

Mr. Banks: So know, so we may not like the access that we're getting but, but it's, it's, it's done its job. It has managed that species and conserved that species. Now we need to fight to get greater access to it.

Commissioner Courville: Let me, let me back up one time and I hate to bogart the floor here but this, this may be my, the declining part of questions, do we have a sense of what the other four states, that we were at one time sort of partners with, if you will, do we know their positions on this same bill and theoretical unfunded mandate?

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Mr. Banks: I don't know their position on the unfunded mandate. I know that they were, like we were, in support of the bill or in support of state management. I don't know that they put out a statement about the bill itself. And they're certainly in favor of state-based or regional management. They voted against my motion. All but one voted against my motion at the council. They were concerned about the timing. They were, Texas, was concerned that it didn't include the charter-for-hire industry, that that's the only way they could support it is, is if, if we brought in the charter-for-hire industry into the motion. And, so there were, there were various reasons. But they all spoke eloquently in front of the council about the need for regional management. So I think we're all in the same page there. They just, they spoke about the need for regional management and they support regional management but they couldn't support my motion. And Florida abstained, so anyway.

Commissioner Courville: Okay. I'll take a breath and let somebody else chime in if they care to.

Chairman Yakupzack: And I, I'd like to follow up since you just made a comment about it, the Texas position, with regard to your amendment about where Texas would support it if the charter-for-hire were included in your amendment. What's the department's position on that?

Mr. Banks: Well, my feeling is right now, Mr. Chairman, is that certainly charter-for-hire traditionally and private angling is all one recreational sector, and that was the way I think Amendment 39 started out, but then when that sector, separation occurred, you know, pulled the charter out from there,

from the private angling, that, that issue was controversial. But it, it has stuck. It has been challenged in court and it has stuck, so the feeling I have is, is yes, traditionally it is part of the recreational sector, but we've got a charter-for-hire sector that's working through the council process, building their framework for management; they're not quite sure about it yet, but they wanted some more time to continue to explore it. I felt like it was fair to give them more time, so I didn't feel like it was fair to try to pull them into this, while they're working on their management framework, at least, at least the folks that are there and talked to us seem to be happy with it, and they want to try to see if that framework works. Now if we, if we do something with the private angling community that works, and is really, really good, I think it would be easy for that group to come back, you know? But to dismantle the commercial side and, and the charter-for-hire that seem to be working, just to get this done, I well it wouldn't have made it. It wouldn't have even passed the council had I included that, so, so I didn't, I didn't feel like it was a, it was a motion that could make it, if I accepted what Texas asked me to do.

Chairman Yakupzack: Okay, will you put back up your chart, please, with your costs, for a second? And, and again, I'm just, I'm following up on what Commissioner Courville asked because I know I will receive calls on it and, and as Chairman, I've been very careful with that. I've received a bunch of calls in the last 15 days, and I've, I've deferred. I've not given public comments and I think that that's my place as Chairman, but being that it's an open Commission meeting, I, the, Courville's, Commissioner Courville pointed out the \$6 million number that is, is, sort of, grows that number tremendously there, because we all recognize that the 1.8 is already here and,

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so what I'm interested in clarification on is the Fisheries' independent number of \$6 million and the enforcement number of \$1 million. Can you itemize the Fisheries' independent number?

Mr. Banks: Sure, sure. So to do the necessary Fisheries' independent sampling for reef fish, there's several different types of sampling that occurs within that management program. You have to take ground fish samples. You have to bottom long-line samples. You have to do vertical-line samples. You have to do plankton samples. And then you have to, to estimate the shrimp by-catch, shrimp effort, to determine your by-catch mortality on the juveniles. So those are your, your main components within Fisheries independent. So ground fish is about \$650,000.00. Bottom long-line, is about \$532,000.00. Vertical line is about \$460,000.00. Plankton is about \$550,000.00. The shrimp effort can range, but it can range anywhere from a couple million to \$4 million, depending on the level of sampling you have to do. And so, so if you remove that \$4 million, then you're down to, to, to \$2½ million for that first year. But, and we can, and we can remove that and, and in years 2 through 5, but we really have to get that number. That's a, the shrimp effort survey determines the juvenile mortality within the stock assessment model that you use. And it's a huge driver of that model. It's a critical piece of information, as I'm told, of the model for the stock assessment of, of re-fish, and so to remove that piece of data from the model, almost makes the model useless. So it, it's a critical piece of information that we have to get. It's also the most expensive, from what I understand, our biologists talking to the NOAA biologists; it's the most expensive part of their survey. Likewise, it, it would be the most expensive part of ours.

Chairman Yakupzack: And so that, with regard to the shrimp surveys, the \$2 to \$4 million, that's just for off the coast of Louisiana?

Mr. Banks: That's right.

Chairman Yakupzack: The, um –

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Courville?

Commissioner Courville: In the middle of that, and so, kind of follow-up to my earlier question, how much of that, do we, of the ones you just listed, do we anticipate that the feds will have to do anyway, in the event you were to transfer snapper management to the state? Is it just the shrimp by-catch or is it all the plankton sample, the vertical long-line and the other things that you mentioned?

Mr. Banks: Well, I would anticipate they would still have to do all of this sampling, okay? It's just a matter of they wouldn't be able to put any kind of federal funds towards this, this effort, so as we appreciate it, in talking to, to them, they wouldn't be able to share the information with us. They wouldn't be able to provide the information to us, as we appreciate.

Commissioner Courville: They, they told you that, we cannot share this information?

Mr. Banks: No, they didn't say we cannot. They just said as we appreciate the –

Commissioner Courville: They're not going to.

Mr. Banks: – the directive of the legislation is that we would not be able to provide that

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information to you. So we have to assume that we would have to go out and replicate all of this.

Commissioner Courville: Wow. Okay.

Mr. Banks: So, that's how we arrived at these numbers.

Chairman Yakupzack: No, that's okay and this, the follow-up to that question is, is, is we all appreciate it and I think you've said earlier that the NOAA currently does a stock assessment for the entire gulf?

Mr. Banks: That's right.

Chairman Yakupzack:— on red snapper, and it, as I appreciated it, this department has a contract with NOAA, where NOAA pays this department to gather the stock-assessment data off the Coast of Louisiana —

Mr. Banks: A portion of it.

Chairman Yakupzack:— to, to contribute?

Mr. Banks: You're right, a portion of it.

Chairman Yakupzack: Right, a portion, and so that, that's my question, what, what is the amount of that contract and if we did our own stock assessment, how much would, how much more would we have to have, would we have to spend more than we're currently being paid by the feds —

Mr. Banks: Oh, absolutely.

Chairman Yakupzack:— to do it?

Mr. Banks: Absolutely.

Mr. Banks: Myron, can you give us an idea of what they pay us, currently, to do the, the closer-end samples, as part of their survey?

Myron: Thank you, thank you for letting me address the Commission. For the fishery independent work, the states, the five states do take part in the sampling regime. In the case of plankton, as an example, there's 101 stations off Louisiana, but we only do seven of those stations and we do the seven closest to Grand Isle. To do an assessment, we would have to do all the stations twice a year, and some of the other sampling regimes, we do a much higher percentage, but, the numbers, you know, the numbers posted would be for us to arrive at the same data for the Louisiana stock assessment. And a percentage of what we do for ground fish, for I think there's 93, 91 or 93 stations for ground fish and this year we're doing 14 of them, so if we took over the full data collection, we would have to do all 93 stations. So, to answer your question, we get 400, we were at \$447,000.00 where we're funded, and through time, through the last few years, we were cut down to 391. We're up to 398 this year.

Commissioner Courville: Mr., Mr. Chairman,

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Courville

Commissioner Courville: So, so you're, you're, make sure I understand this because I'm way out of my element here, you're saying' that currently, all of these samples are snapper-exclusive? There is absolutely no other species that's out there that you're looking' at?

Myron: No sir. The, but —

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Commissioner Courville: So what do you do, so let me, okay I thought that was the answer, so what are you going to do with all the other species that you're looking out, at, out there? You going to just stop that?

Myron: Well, the major expense is going to sea to get the data, so I'm certain all the data would at least be going into our data-management system, which is up there, and what happens politically, after that, could be out of my hands.

Commissioner Courville: So, conceptually, if we're going out there, we're collecting, we're now collecting that data?

Myron: Right.

Commissioner Courville: Can we send an invoice to the feds for all the other species that we've gathered data on?

Myron: If we wouldn't have a grant for it –

Commissioner Courville: Hell, we might make money on this.

Myron: Right, right, if we wouldn't have a grant –

Commissioner Courville: We can do it cheaper than they can do it.

Myron: But if they would pay us for it, I'm sure we'd happily take their money.

Secretary Melancon: If, let me answer that. I think I'm on the third time. Absolutely no funding from Commerce, NOAA, Council or anybody; that's the killer pill amendment. That's what the Chairman did it for. You don't get any money. You can do whatever you want and I, you know we've talked about well, are they still going to collect

data? Yeah, they're still going to collect data. And will it be public knowledge? Yeah, at the end of the year you can get it. It doesn't do you any good all during those 12, those months before they publish it and put it out. So it may be 14 months before whatever data they collect comes out, for you to get to it, but they, the, the answer about the spending, about the funding is it's, is, as Mr. Grahada said, this is an unfunded, mandate and the perfect example of the definition.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Secretary. I, just to be clear, I, we, we're, this Commission is, as I think we're going to hear, I got a stack of white cards here an inch thick, we're going to hear from people that this Commission's been hearing from, over the last 3 weeks, and the, these questions that at least I'm asking, are, are from a perspective to give me the ability to answer some of these questions. And the questions are along the lines of we've got a Fisheries budget of, of nearly \$80 million, or so, and so if, if, what is it truly going to cost, and can that money come from other pots within the Fisheries Department, and that's the, that's the questions that are being asked and so, to me, so that's why I'm trying to fully understand these numbers. And, and I asked very pointed questions about the first set of numbers that we got 3 weeks ago, and that's all we're doing now, is trying to refine these numbers to understand, to be able to answer questions to the constituents, for, that, that call this Commission. So, that, that, I, I, I appreciate the answers there, Patrick, on that one and, and the next one is on enforcement. We see that there's a million dollars added for enforcement. Do, do, do, Colonel Broussard, do you want to take that one?

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Colonel Broussard: Yes, Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission, that million dollars is for man hours and up to 50 percent of it can actually be used for equipment acquisitions, to do saltwater enforcement.

Chairman Yakupzack: And do, do, and will you please just explain for the, for the public, what saltwater enforcement you currently do, and under what, what arrangements do you, do you handle that?

Colonel Broussard: We currently have a joint enforcement agreement with NOAA, where we put man out on the Gulf to patrol in the EEZ out to 200 miles. And that covers all saltwater fisheries.

Chairman Yakupzack: Do you know the amount of that annual contract?

Colonel Broussard: Right now it is right at a million dollars.

Chairman Yakupzack: So, so in order, if, if, if somehow that was amended to remove the red snapper component out of it, it would, it would cost an additional million a year?

Colonel Broussard: Exactly.

Chairman Yakupzack: Okay.

Chairman Yakupzack: –

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Courville?

Commissioner Courville: Let me, let me make sure I understood that right. So currently, the feds pay us a million dollars to patrol, and you're looking' at all species –

Colonel Broussard: That's correct.

Commissioner Courville: – of fish?

Colonel Broussard: That is correct.

Commissioner Courville: So under this unfunded mandate, what are they going to do with all the other fish in, in patrolling? I mean, are they just going to say they're on their own? I mean, are they going to stop patrol, I, I don't, I'm, I'm having' trouble. I get the unfunded mandate part of this, you know, I get that. But that sounds fine in concept, but in application you can't just close your eyes to one fish.

Secretary Melancon: Well, the only thing that I can assume, when you get no money, that's us. They're still getting their money. They'll get all the money that's supposed to come to us, but the law now says that any group associated with the Gulf Red Snapper Management Authority, will get no money, okay? So that money will just be re-budgeted and I would suspect they'll contract somebody to go and do those fisheries for me. They cannot spend it with any of the five states.

Commissioner Courville: The, so that's the way that, that you guys interpret this –

Secretary Melancon: Well that, that's the way that, that basically, when I've had discussions when I was in Congress about how these amendments work, in particular, because I've seen this amendment that withdraws funding, and there's actually an Unfunded Mandate Act, and so finally, maybe we'll get a number from the federal government of what that number is going to be, to the states. I would have wished I would had it out there, before we ever got to this point, but still in all, that Unfunded Mandate Act triggers actions by the

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Congress and staff, to produce some documents that we can all take a look at. So the Governor, myself, you, the public, CCA, everybody will get the chance to see that, at some point in time. But right now, based upon what the amendment says and does, is that no monies from NOAA can be shared with any of the five states associated with the Management Authority.

Commissioner Courville: Of red snapper? That's the way I read it.

Secretary Melancon: Management Authority, state or the Management Authority. So it doesn't matter whether it's another fish or not. They're not going to send the money. That's the intent of the amendment, is to kill the bill.

Commissioner Courville: Okay, I, I, and I interpret it a little bit differently, that's fine.

Secretary Melancon: Maybe we can get a reporter to call and talk to a parliamentarian, or maybe talk to Chairman Bishop, or Representative Young from Alaska or two other ones, Grahada from Arizona and Dingell from Michigan, because they all were opposed to it. And one of the problems with the bill is in the bill, every time it says Magnuson Stevens, and it was, the bill originally said we were going to be getting the federal funding, and when the Chairman said no you won't, Mr. Young then came in and says I would like to see Magnuson Stevens, the words completely taken out of this bill, to make sure that they don't dismantle Magnuson Stevens.

Commissioner Courville: Did that pass or fail?

Secretary Melancon: What?

Commissioner Courville: His –

Secretary Melancon: No he withdrew it - Mr. Graves would work with him, but he didn't see how he was going to be able to achieve that. Mr. Graves agreed to the same, so, you know, that's going to be problematic. You take Magnuson Stevens out of that bill and, basically, you don't have a bill. You might want to look at, I want to say for entertainment and enjoyment, but you might want to take a look at the meeting, I think it was the 15<sup>th</sup>, if I remember correctly of June, and when you get to the hearing, it starts around a Minute 33 or 34, I believe.

Commissioner Courville: Thank you, thank you, sir.

Chairman Yakupzack: Any other question or discussion from the Commission, at this time? With considering' we'll move forward. We got, we have quite a few public comments here. I'll start with the ones that do not wish to speak, I have a comment from a Ben Graham of Baton Rouge. He does not wish to speak. Says he supports state management of red snapper. Say again? Okay. You get, you get put in a bigger stack. So, next comment, does not want to, wish to speak, Mr. Scott Rainey from Lafayette, his comment is that he wants the state to manage red snapper. Next comment, Mr. Carlos Vega, I support state regulated, state-regulated snapper season, Lafayette, Louisiana. And the final comment not wishing to speak is a Mr. Charles Cheramie of 210 Ladane Lane, Lot 1. The city's not listed and he checked the box that says I am against the proposal. I'm not, I'm not sure, clarity. All right, so first up for public comments verbally, we'll start with Mr. Graham and, as he heads up here I'm going to let you know we used to

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have a giant 3-foot-diameter clock back there on the wall that we could use to help regulate this. I don't know what, maybe, if that went –

LDWF Employee: I'll see if I can get maintenance -

Chairman Yakupzack: That went out with the, with the, with our funding or what, but in any case, I'm going to pull out my phone, not to be rude, just to, to keep a time and to, kinda, keep this flowing'. I think considering' this stack of folks, we ought to limit to 3 minutes, the best we can. If you're right in the middle of a thought, I'm going to let you roll through it, but I'll have to interrupt you, too much longer than that. So, Mr. Graham, state your name and your address and have at it.

Mr. Ben Graham: My name is Ben Graham. My address is 425 Leeward Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana and I appreciate your time, Commissioner and Secretary. I appreciate you guys being' here today. I'm a recreational fisherman. I fish out of Grand Isle. I've got a couple of kids I try to take fishing', but no kids-know-how-to- fish week. Get hooks everywhere, except in the fish's mouth. I just wanted to go over a few things. I've been following' this deal for a while, because you guys know there's plenty of red snapper off the Coast of Louisiana and the Secretary brought up, you know, there's plenty here, but there's not enough in Florida. And that's been that way for a long time. We've tried to work through regional management and the Council, and it has never passed. It's never gone anywhere, you know, for whatever reason, which is, in my opinion, why the, the Graves Bill has come up the way it has. There are plenty of fish in Louisiana. There are plenty of fish in Texas. West, east of the river, there's not quite as

many fish and we know that, which, you know, we shouldn't be concerned with trying' to move the fish from here to there, but it would make logical sense to split it up and try to manage it more locally, to achieve the goal of conservation of the resources and the best solution for all user groups. And really, you know, I, I just, I want to see us have access to the fish. I want to be able to continue to make memories, my kids and my family, takin' 'them fishing', and at the same time being' mindful of the resource and not, you know, not over-fishing it. I just feel like, you know, the, the issue keeps coming' up about the Council wanting' to have a recreational advisory committee. Well, part of the reason that I see issue with that is, there was a snapper advisory committee that was formed, and I think 3 or 4 years ago, maybe longer. Those guys put a, and I know two guys who were on the, on that committee, they put a bunch of time in, came up with a bunch of ideas, communicated those to the Council and they all went in the garbage. They didn't do anything with any of 'them, didn't act on any of 'them. So it's kinda hard to convince somebody to go and, and I've been to probably ten Council meetings, and I was at one of them and they said well, would you be willing to serve on this committee? And my response to 'them was, yes I would, but if you're going to do the same thing you did the ideas last time, then what's the point of anybody being' on the committee. If you already have a predetermined notion of what you want to do, we're not, I mean, I took off work to come here today, and I do that when I go the Council meetings, same thing. You know, if you, I'm not going to put my time in and expect other people to do that, if you already have an idea of what you're going to achieve. But, I do support state management of red snapper. I think it's the right thing to do. I think it's the right thing

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for the people of Louisiana. You know, the sportsmen here, as well as the, you know, the communities along the coast. I appreciate your time and, hopefully we'll see you again soon.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Next up, Mr. Drew Ballard. State your name and address, please?

Mr. Drew Ballard: My name's Drew Ballard, Grand Isle, Louisiana, 104 Orleans Avenue, anyway, I, I don't support the, the Graves Bill at all. I'm a young, commercial fisherman and it could kill off commercial fishing, in general, so I, I don't support it. And I just wanted to be, let that be known. I don't really have much else to say on it, keep it short and sweet, but I wanted it to be known that I don't support it. Okay.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. Ballard.

Mr. Ballard: Thank you for your time.

Chairman Yakupzack: Next up, Mr. Buddy Guidon, is that right?

Buddy Guidon: Guidon, close enough.

Chairman Yakupzack: Guidon, sorry. Again, the same handwritten quality as myself. Representing Gulf of Mexico Re-Fish Shareholders Alliance. Will you state your address, please?

Buddy Guidon: Yes, 1902 Wharf Road, Galveston, Texas. I represent commercial fishermen from Key West Florida, Brownsville, Texas and the Graves Amendment is nothing more than a fish grab. The Coastal Conservation Association and recreational fishing organizations have been trying to take fish away from

commercial fishermen and charter boat fishermen for years. They haven't been able to accomplish that through the Council process, so now they want state management, because then they can get out from underneath Magnuson Stevens, and it actually gives commercial fishermen and charter boat fishermen protection. It keeps us in the business of fishing. As it states in the Graves Amendment, or Graves Bill that they'd be able to take 10 percent of the commercial fishery. They could take 100 percent of the commercial fishery and give it to the purely recreational fishermen. It will not give them a year-round fish. It will not give them a big bag limit. What we have to do is work out a management system for the purely recreational fishermen. Forget about trying to take fish away from the 98 percent of the people in this country that deserve access to the fish of the commercial fishery and the rides on charter boats. You have to get away from that idea and start working on a management system. The only ones that haven't come to the table to work on a management system is the pure recs. I understand they have jobs. They need to go. They need to force their representation, like the Coastal Conservation Association, to start acting instead of fundraising, on an issue that's very important to the people in these coastal communities. With that said, we have an issue of a lot of fish off the Texas coast, a lot of fish off Louisiana, a lot of fishermen over in the eastern Gulf. That's something you could address, but in essence, your Council votes aren't going to let you do that, , because there's three states that have very little fish and two states that have a lot of fish. So I think working on just a management plan for pure-rec fishermen, give them a tag where they can fish year-round. They want year-round access, a tag. You hold onto it. Instead of a derby fishery that forces people to go fish when the

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government tells them to, give them a tag, let them go fish when they want. Then the pressure that you create by having a, a very short season would go away, kinda like it does with your state season. It's much longer. You don't have the pressure for people go out in the state's -, because they have lots of time to get it done. So instead of looking for solutions and, and you, you have a great representation in Louisiana now on, on, on the Council. They're finally starting to move issues forward, where in the past, we've had deadlock. Nothing gets done, eight/nine votes. It's very frustrating for someone that's in a family business. I buy 500,000 pounds of red snapper out of Grand Isle, Louisiana commercially, to be distributed in Louisiana, Texas. That's my business. It's very frustrating to keep going to these Council meetings and seeing nothing getting done and, and since Louisiana has had a change in administration, there's actually things happening. And I think if you went with trying' to find a solution to this problem, it, instead of rebuilding it, when you take state management and divide it up five ways, you still have to figure out a way to bring that together. So that's another added cost you're going to have. Bringing all five states together to figure out the, what, what we do as a total and, and you're going to have other management shortcomings', like, like they're going to require that you have observer coverage on your commercial boats. They're going to require that you either have cameras or, or observer coverage, so not all of the costs have even been looked at. So, if you're looking' at the feds are, they're going to take all the money away from anything that touches red snapper, in the Graves Bill. So we need to forget about the Graves Bill. We need to move on to finding a solution in the recreational fishery that'll work for the fishermen. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Mr. Scott Hickman, representing Charter Fishermen's Association.

Mr. Scott Hickman: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of the Commission. Thanks for letting' me, come over here and speak today. First off, I'd like to say I'm a, a founding Board member of the Charter Fishermen's Association. We're the largest federally permitted charter boat association in the Gulf of Mexico. I'm a 30-year participant in the charter boat and a new participant in commercial fishery, out of Galveston, Texas. I have hunting ranches all over Texas. We run about 2,500 people throughout our ranches and our boats every year. My wife runs the business and one of our popular trips that she books is what we call our, our south Louisiana and Louisiana tuna fishing' experience. And it's a lot of our deer hunters and stuff that come to Texas. She sets these trips to come to Venice and fish with your federally permitted boats over here. Y'all got a great resource and we appreciate it. I enjoy it myself a few times a year, as well. First off, I'm here to speak about the Graves Amendment, HR3094. Our association's adamantly against the Graves Amendment. The charter boats want no part of it. The commercial folks want no part of it. It's obvious that the plan is about taking 99 percent of America's access away from them. 99 percent of the people in Louisiana don't own offshore boats. They access the fishery through the great restaurants here in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. People come from all over the world to eat in those restaurants. Same thing with the charter boats. Charter boats offer access to this fishery to 99 percent of the population of the country that don't have these private boats, or have access to these private boats. It, it's

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pretty obvious that this is a fish-ground, like Mr. Gwinden said, and, you know, going' back, y'all talked about sector separation issues earlier, uh. The Texas charter boat captains started working', or were approached by some of the Florida captains, back about 10 years ago, and being', you know, the good Texans we were, we reached out to our friends at CCA National in Houston. Over about a year-and-a-half period of time, we asked for multiple meetings to set down with our federally permitted charter boat fleet and the folks at CCA. Not one time would they accept our invitation to set down and come up with solutions. So, that's how the Charter Fishermen's Association, kind of, got going'. It grew, and grew and grew, to where over the majority of the guys in the Gulf now, ladies, that are federally permitted, have joined the Association. Other associations have joined the Association and we have worked with the Gulf Council to find real solutions to these problems, and we, we've come a long way. We got two amendments working' through the process right now. We got electronic logbooks on, on fleets all over the Gulf right now. La Creel doing' a great job here and I think that solutions are the way to go. And the Gulf Council can do a great job. We're appreciative to have Patrick Banks on the Gulf Council now and make this new motion to fix things for the private recreational folks. They deserve the same great, sustainable, accountable access that the commercial fleet now enjoys, and that the charter boat fleet hopes to enjoy pretty soon, too. So if anything else, I just, you know, list, listen to your folks that are on that Gulf Council. I think they, they represent this Commission very well and they're going to find a, a good solution for your anglers and I, you know, right now people keep talking' about not having' access. Here in Texas we got 365 days a

year, in state waters, so a lot of that Texas access is coming through state waters, for the private recreational folks. I don't know what y'all's season's going to be in state waters this year, but I think it's close to 300 or 250 days, or something' like that, so there's, there's a lot of that access is happening' through state waters. You know, I know that the federal season would be much, much longer if we did away with the state water seasons around the Gulf, so it's not just the problem of the federal agencies that are managing these fisheries. We've all got to come together and fix the problem and, once again, I applaud Patrick Banks and his folks at the Council for, finally, getting' a motion to fix this, so thank you very much.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Next up, Mr. Shane Cantrell, Charter Fishermen's Association, or was that you? No, that's another one, Charter Fishermen's Association. Sorry. State your name and address, please?

Captain Shane Cantrell: Captain Shane Cantrell, 4424 Avenue L, Galveston, Texas. I'm the Executive Director of the Charter Fishermen's Association. We're a gulf-wide charter organization. We're the largest federally permitted charter boat association in the Gulf of Mexico. We've got members all over, from all five Gulf States. I just wanted to point out a couple things on the Graves Bill. It creates more government bureaucracy. It's not creating a smaller government. It's creating a much, much larger government. We're going to have five different plans going' five different directions, none of which have the funding to be able to do that as we, we recently found got cut. So that, that's going to create a, even a bigger hurdle than, than what we had before. The private anglers are the ones

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getting' caught in the middle of this. It, it's not, not going to give them anymore access. Being able to, to have these five, five Gulf states fighting over which, which direction to go and what to do with commercial fishery, it's not going to solve anything. What is working is through the Gulf Council. The commercial industry's gotten their house in order. The charter boats have, have got a season for the non-boat-owned public. We're developing a management system for the charter boats and the head boats and I applaud Patrick and, and the Secretary for getting the ball rolling for the private anglers, to be able to come to the Gulf Council and get something' working that, that's going to be developed from the Private Angler Advisory Panel, made up of strictly private anglers, to get the best thing that's going to work for them, instead of the same thing we, we've had for year after year, meeting after meeting, to the Gulf Council and, and pushing' from the federal government, of nothing getting done. Nothing's getting done, because the recreational representation on that Council has made it that way. It's not, because nothing can get done, it's, because they've continually voted against it. We need to get something new on there and I, I really believe the State of Louisiana's going to take the lead on that and, and step forward.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. Cantrell. Next up, Mr. Johnathan Walker. Johnathan Walker not here? Not at the moment, at least. Mr. Steve Leonard. Yes sir.

Steve Leonard: Steve Leonard, Clinton, Louisiana. I'm a recreational fisherman. I'm in favor of the Graves Bill. I'm astounded by the own words of the commercial fishermen, 500,000 pounds from Grand Isle,

is that what I heard? Did I hear that correctly?

Chairman Yakupzack: Yes sir.

Steve Leonard: That was purchased? That's 10-pound fish, that's 50,000 fish, and we're actually having' a discussion here about recreational fishermen over-harvesting or are we worried about that? I, I'm just, I, I am so in favor of getting away from whoever is telling us that we are catching so many fish in 9 days that we're endangering the recreation of the total harvest of red snapper. And I would just like you to please consider the recreational fishermen. I'm a \$15.00-an-hour guy. I am not a rich guy, okay? I, I work for every dime I have and I, I'm glad to get out, just a little bit and enjoy this recreational harvest, but golly guys, we're hurting'. We, we're hurting' here, because we, we get 9 days in the federal waters and, and by the grace of the government, we get a 1-year, 9-mile limit. I, I mean, I just don't get that. I don't understand that. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. Leonard. Mr. Joshua Duhon, you, you wish to speak?

Mr. Joshua Duhon: No sir. I, I put no.

Chairman Yakupzack: Okay, no you put, actually, must've meant to put no. You put yes, but you say other. His, his comment is that he supports state management of red snapper.

Mr. Joshua Duhon: Sir? Okay. Good afternoon, gentlemen. My name is Joshua Duhon. I'm from Youngsville, Louisiana. I'm from the Vermillion Bay area and all year long we get a 9-day season, and most of the people that I know and, and talk to on a

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daily basis have regular jobs and, and can't take off during' those 9 days, and can, maybe, only fish the weekend. But if you looked at the weather this year and the storm, and everything that occurred, I didn't get to make it out there. I have a family that loves to fish and we didn't get to fish. So, I'm here today to say I do support state management of red fishing, because of, red snapper fishing, excuse me, because of the fact that we don't get to enjoy the, the 9 miles and the statewide season that most people get to enjoy in the east, because if we live in the Bay area, we have further runs to get to state red snapper grounds. So I understand with everybody, you know, wanting' to work together and everything else, but, you know, with seeing' what the Gulf Council's accomplished for recreational fishermen, I think it, it's time for the state to step up and do something', to help all the, the average people that pay each and every year to go fishing', get their license, their boats, everything else, so thank you for your time.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. Duhon. Mr. James Bruce? State your name and address, please?

Mr. James Bruce: James Bruce, Cutoff, Louisiana, third generation commercial fisherman. I'm again' the Graves Bill, because it won't fix nothing'. First of all, y'all got to fix the state. The states keep it open year-round, and it goes to the TAC, it goes to the quota. So if y'all get the states in order, and follow the federal laws, then y'all get more days to fish. We don't get many days. I get maybe 10 days a year, as a commercial fisherman, but we went from, we got cut in half, when we went in 2007 to this system, and we didn't hear no, no complaining' from the commercial, because the fuel was \$4.00 a gallon. Now we

doubled in our quota, and now in the last 9 years, how much more licenses are y'all selling'? So how big the pie is going to be? Not everybody can go kill a polar bear, you know? You got to have tags and all. Y'all got to get this, the recreational side straight. It's nothing' to do with the commercial. Stop trying' to take our fish. We feed people. And if somebody could tell me why the states are open so long, I'd like to know. And they all get a long, longer season, instead of 9 days. So they got to have a meeting somewhere, instead of trying' to take the fish, get y'all house in order, the recreational. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Mr. Russell Bellard?

Mr. Russell Bellard: My name's Russell Bellard. I'm from Lafayette, Louisiana. Let's talk some numbers, just a minute. 9 days, yes, the recreational length is 9 days, that to catch 406, 460,000 fish. In the Gulf of Mexico, from Florida to Brownsville, Texas, the catch, our share of the tack at two fish per man, two 10-pound fish, in 9 days, that means we would have to have 23,000 recreational anglers go out from Florida to Brownsville, and take off of work, have great weather, calm seas and each man would catch two 10-pound fish, for 9 consecutive days. Now you tell me those numbers make sense. Are there 23,000 recreational anglers going' from Florida to Brownsville to do this? Heck no. That is the numbers you get from the Gulf Management Regional Council and from the federal government. So when you want to go make camps with the feds, this is what you get. Look what the hell's going' on in Washington today. You know all the upside-down, tipsy-turvy things that are happening'. So, I'm trying' to stay brief, the federal data's flawed. Every, every number

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they come out with flawed. They, they, these numbers prove they're flawed. The state went out of compliance, as Texas had done in 2006, I think, I was, I was very proud of our state for finally stepping' up to the plate and telling' the feds where they could stick it. Then Florida joined us, Alabama joined us, Mississippi joined us and now us pushing' for state management. You can't take red snapper from the rocks and move them to the Florida rocks. This, they're not a pelagic fish. You can't put them in a boat and transport, port them over there. You have to manage what we have and our state can take care of our business; not Florida's business, our business. Texas take care of your business, Louisiana will take care of our business. All I heard is how we can't do it, how we can't raise money. Well, why do you have to spend a million dollars to go out 40 miles and check red snapper fishermen, and spend all of that money? Why don't you just stay right there by the ports? I got to come back to my port. I got to go home. You got to come back to every one of our ports, so why does the Wildlife and Fisheries have to run 40 and 50 miles out looking' for red snapper fishing', burning' all that fuel and all that money, to check just a few people, when you could check every person? Whether it's the speckled trout fishermen safety violations, you can check everything staying' close in your home ports. What about a red snapper stamp? I'm going' to lobster in' in Florida. I have to buy a lobster stamp. I know every one of us rec, recreational fishermen would contribute monies because it costs us a lot of money to go fishing'. Conclusion, Mr. Melancon, you said we get some, give some, well we been given' a lot, my friend, and we been getting' a lot and, and it hadn't been very nice. And, I think it is impossible to work with the feds. I, I've come to that conclusion. I'm 67 years

old. I have ten grandchildren. I would love to take them snapper fishing'. I cannot do it right now, in 9 days I cannot do it. It's impossible, almost impossible for me to do it. I, obviously support state management of this fishery and I think our people are accountable to us, in each state, and they will do a job for it. I am very disappointed that our state seems to be wavering on such hard work that all five states have come together to push forward. Thank you for, uh.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Mr. Wayne Werner?

Mr. Wayne Werner: Wayne Werner, 16731 Northwest Avenue, 73<sup>rd</sup> Terrace, Alachua, Florida. I've been running' my fishing' operation out of Leesville, Louisiana since 1985. 80 percent of the fish that I bring to the dock are sold right here, in Baton Rouge, New Orleans. And you know me, I'm proud to be a commercial fisherman and I'm proud that we help support the tourism here. And I think that, you know, a lot of people don't understand the whole concept. The Graves Bill, I stand against it, but it also has a statement to Magnuson Stevens. You cannot take the state and just run your state. You still have to run it with the other four states. And, you know, the reason why they wanted to drop the ball on regional management be, before Patrick got there, was real simple. They couldn't come to an agreement on how many, who got how many fish. Everybody wanted more fish. They couldn't do it. I agree. The, the state should run the private recreational angler. I just don't think it should be under the Graves Amendment. Now, as far as this costs, I have to say something' about it, because in your fishery independent data, that fishery service requires checks and balances, and part of the checks and balances on this is

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going to be, the observer programs, or video monitoring. They're expensive systems to run. But it's part of the checks and balances that have to go with fisheries' dependent data. The other thing that hasn't been mentioned here is, every action that's happened with the red snapper, has resulted in a lawsuit. So you might as well put that into your cost analysis, because if you think, because the state's going to run it, the, the lawsuits are going to stop, it's not going to happen. And, you know, I watched this Council, kind of, degrade into the situation, and I think I see a little light at the end of the tunnel, because I'm the only person I know that's attended over 100 Gulf Council meetings. And, you know, having done that you're going to see a lot of stuff happening, and I think what I see happening' now is I see a shift where we, you know, you're going to have to go in that direction. And it's pretty simple, you know, just like some of the people said, you get 46 days, if you shut down all the states from, if they all went compliant, they get the same amount days as the charter boats; 46, but that's probably not going to happen in this day and age. So, you know, I just wanted to and I'm glad that you gave me the time to come and talk to you today. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. Werner. Mr. Ed Pitre?

Mr. Ed Pitre: My name's Ed Pitre, 18716 Highway 3235, Galliano. I'm a fourth-generation commercial fisherman, and charter fisherman, and I run a couple of boats out of Fourchon and Gynal. I'm against the Graves Bill. I don't think the state should get a hold of it, because the feds are doing' a pretty good job. 12-14 years ago, I seen a decrease in red snapper. It's hard to catch your limit out there. Whatever the feds did over this time, they made it

happen, and so I say why throw a wrench in the spokes. Leave them, leave them do their thing. They're doing' a good job. Thank you y'all, guys.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. Pitre. Mr. Steve Tomany?

Mr. Steve Tomany: I'm Steve Tomany. My address is 119 Constantine Drive in Port Fourchon, Louisiana. I grew up here in Baton Rouge. I've been in the charter fishing business, I think I incorporated my business in 1982. I started working' on boats in the '70s. I'm also a commercial red snapper fisherman and I have been living this red snapper management, whatever you want to call it, it's been a up-and-down system, but I have seen this, this thing, as much as it's cost me over the years. I had, I used to have four boats. We used to run 150 trips a year on four boats, takin' 15-20 people at a time. I'm down to Ed that just spoke, is buying' one of my boats. I have another boat, but we had to really taper down, because of cutbacks. My business was really built real strong and squarely on red snapper fishing'. I've had to cut back, and I'm not saying' that as a complaint. I think it had to happen. We were killing' a lot of red snapper. I was about, you know, 15 years ago, about getting' ulcers about where I was going to catch the next one, for these groups of people. Everybody has big expectations, when they go on your boat and it was really tough to come back with a good, a basket or two of red snapper. That's all changed, so red snapper management has worked. Who gets what is always the thorny question, and it still is, and I started going' to Council meetings', I've always, I went to some way back in the, way back years, but I started going' 9 or 10 years ago, and I've only missed two since. That's about five a year. I go, a lot of my personal time

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and, and, and expense to, to go to these things and witness them, try to influence what I can influence, and I told Mr. Melancon on the first time I met him, I said I'm, I'm really tired of going' to these meetings where my state representative has his hand up against everything that we were trying' to do, in the commercial industry and the charter industry. It's really frustrating to see no follow up, no help from anybody in Louisiana. These are our businesses, this is how we make a living. Like I said, at one time I had four or five crews working' for me, I had a dozen people working' for me. I've shaved it on down, you know? But it, it, it had to go this way. I have been a proponent of some kind of tag system and I know nobody likes me telling' the recreational guys what they need to have, but one man was talking' about he couldn't go in June. If they get some kind of tag system you'll be able to plan your, your day. This is what we've been working for in the charter industry. We've got, we work for, and it took us 9 years to get sector separation. We have a quota of fish and we have a bunch of permitted, federal permitted charter boats and we're, you know, we tease about you're going to have to throw us in a room and take all the knives and guns away and we'll come out with how we're going to divide amongst ourselves but at least the industry's working through this council process to get it done for ourselves instead of having somebody from up above just tell us how it's going to be. At least I have input and, and it's important and sometimes we get ignored just like, you know, you don't always vote the way that everybody tells you to up here. It's, it's perfectly understandable but, but we also, our input helps, in the long run it starts helping'. And we have just seen kind of a no movement situation in the recreational fishery. And it'll happen sooner or later but there's a lot of us

that put a lot of our time and our businesses depend on what we've been able to gain in the fisheries process in the council and we're very pleased to have Secretary Melancon and calling' some of the shots for us. I appreciate it.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Mr. Scott Rainey, Lafayette.

Mr. Scott Rainey: My name's Scott Rainey, I live at 113 La Port Circle, Lafayette, Louisiana. I'd like to thank the Commission for the opportunity to speak again. I've got a couple of questions and refer to these points, first thing council's not working, council get, can't get anything done, and why would we create another bureaucracy? If this is not working, why wouldn't we create another bureaucracy? What you guys are doing' doesn't work so let's stop doing it. There, there's no point to continue down a path that doesn't lead anywhere. Regional management is not funded, we need \$10 million. Do a \$10.00 tag, it's funded. We paid for it. It's a very simple solution. How many recreational licenses are there out there? I mean this is a number we can easily measure, figure out what it would cost to, to fund this management system. I heard that the quota's been doubled; where did those fish go? We didn't catch them as recreational fishers. We've got 9 days to do it and I can guarantee you I'm not catching more than 4 fish a year. Is the fishery model even accurate? You know 2 years ago we were saying there are no red snapper, we got to keep it at 2 fish, the snapper population isn't increasing, and anybody that goes out there can tell you there are red snapper everywhere in Louisiana. So I, I would like to know, is the model we're using even accurate? Does this sampling that we do truly represent what's out there? The second thing or I guess the last think I want to say

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is, you know, and Secretary Melancon mentioned this, he said that to have a compromise, you know, nobody can walk away happy. Well the only people who are unhappy are the recreational fishermen. The commercial fishermen want to keep the system as is because you're winning. I would suggest that this is not a compromise, this is not a fish grab from the recreational side, and the quota is not going to change if we go to state management, as I understand it. So, you know, there are things that can be done; what we're doing now is not working. Thanks.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Mr. Gunner Waldman of Abbeville?

Mr. Gunner Waldman: Good afternoon Commission Members and Mr. Secretary, thank y'all for the time to allow me to speak today. I've been red snapper fishing' out of Vermillion Bay, trout fishing, been a saltwater fisherman since I was about 4 years old. As most of you, we're all Cajuns, it's a way of life with us. So, I've saw the lean years growing' up back in the, early '60s and '70s and I've seen the good years. And first off, I also I, I've worked for this department as a game warden in Vermillion Patch for 13 years so I'm, I'm very versed and respected. I have much respect for this department and the Commission. But anyway, I think Magnuson Stevens, the way that the red snapper assessment, stock assessments is 30 years old. The first thing is I think it's broken. I think the, the formulations are bad, I think there are way more red snapper than, than is being' formulated and, so with that said I'd like to see Senator, I mean Gary Graves' bill go forward and pass and also I'm for the bill and for our regional and state management of red snapper. Second is something, if we don't do anything I now make my living' as a

safety consultant out in the gas field. I've seen hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of platforms being' removed with thousands of pounds of red snapper being' decimated; where do they go? Most of the time in olden days they blew up a platform, they're doing less of that now but those fish are dead. We don't have scuba divers going' down there and shewing away the red snapper, all fish. And lastly I am a scuba diver and spear fisherman. I can take any one of you on my boat, actually bring you videos from YouTube that we film our dives. We can't shoot amber jack during amber jack season because sometimes the red snapper are getting in the way. We spend way more time trying', we spend a whole tank, 50 minutes down on the bottom trying to shoot one amber jack because there are just sometimes when you go to take a shot you got to small red snapper getting' in your way. So – But to get back to my original thing, the, the, the framework in which red snapper, stock assessments are done is, is flawed. We are using old formulation and that needs to be fixed in Magnuson Stevens. And if that's done then everybody would, I think would be happy and we would get more of a sustainable stock in red snapper and be able to harvest more. Thank you for your time.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Next I have David Cresson, CCA.

David Cresson: Good afternoon, commissioners. We got here in the morning but its afternoon now. Thank you for having' me, my name is David Cresson, I am the executive director of the Coastal Conservation Association. And, it's a pleasure to be with you this morning'. Commissioner Courville, you mentioned earlier that you're going to have to go to a Gulf Council meeting sometime soon, well

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don't bother because you've got one going' on here right now, you've got, you know our friends from Texas and Florida who are here giving' the same speeches that they give every time at the Gulf Council, so you just assume that everything you hear here today is, is what's been scripted and they've talked about a thousand times before, so, it feels a lot like a Gulf Council meeting today. You know one thing that's clear to me in listening to everything that I've heard is how few people have actually read Congressman Graves' bill. If anybody anywhere thinks that Congressman Graves would do anything to purposefully injure the commercial fisheries in Louisiana or anywhere else, they just simply don't know Congressman Graves or what his motives are. I should also mention that his bill has 40 some-odd co-authors from both sides of the aisle including all but one I believe of the Louisiana delegates as a co-author. So, this is not some fly by the seat of our pants, throw something' together bill, this has been worked on for years now. Even before Congressman Graves was a congressman well this is sort of the culmination. One other thing, and I want to comment on something' the secretary said earlier and, and he mentioned that the Gulf Council save, saved red snapper. I don't believe that's true. I think Gulf, Gulf red snapper were in a lot of trouble until this, the Gulf Council was sued by conservationists, including CCA, and that turned the management of red snapper to a, toward a positive direction. So, as Mr. Tomeny said, 15 years ago it was hard to find them; they got sued, they were held to, to the proper management styles and then snapper turned around. So they were failing it, got sued and now it's made a recovery. I, too much on my paper to comment on, there's too many comments made, too many corrections to try and make so I, I really just want to talk about

frustration. I've been at CCA 9 years and with all due respect to our friends at the department, and they are friends, most of them have been to 2 meetings. We have been down this road, we have been asking for better management for 9 years now. The system has failed. It has failed us miserably. The secretary mentioned something about the quota nearly doubling and it has gone up but we're stuck at 9 days. So that's not working'. So after these years and years and years of frustration you can understand why it was time for congressional action. You know, an act of Congress is what they say when something' is really hard, you need an act of Congress. Well, that's what we needed; well, we got one. And Congressman Graves stepped up, put this together, and worked with all the user groups in doing so got a lot of feedback from all of them. If anybody denies that they're just not telling' the truth, he worked with all of them to put this together and came out with HR-3094. We were thrilled, we were thrilled when Governor Edwards pledged his support to the 5-state management plan and we were thrilled to hear the secretary and so forth say the same things leading up to where we are now. You can imagine our frustration upon hearing that the department was not on board with the commission's resolution from earlier that month, and I expressed this to the secretary and I must admit I, I would say the secretary and I have a very open and honest dialogue back and forth, I told him we were disappointed about this, he explained the reasons he thought they had to be where they were. But it occurred to me that the announcement that was made was made before the commission knew that it was going to be made. It was made before any of the user groups like ours knew that it was going to be made. It was made before the governor knew it was going to be made.

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The only people that knew about it besides the department were some anti-recreational groups who were floating around like it was a, a, like an e-high 5, running' around in the internet world. So that was frustrating. We talked about that and understood that we just moved forward. It's also frustrating that the concerns that were, were expressed about the bill were not expressed to the congressman before they were made public, and they were not expressed to us, they were not expressed really to anybody until they were expressed to some reporter in Texas. So you can understand the frustrations that, that we feel. We have the final frustration; there's several more obviously but the final frustration is to hear that the preferred alternative is to go back to the Gulf Council. We've been there already; like on four members said earlier when the committees put together recommendations and the Gulf Council doesn't like them, they just ignore them. So I think in the amendment that's been put forth by the department it talks about the recreational ad hoc committee that's going to be put together; it doesn't matter what that committee says, if it doesn't fit with what the Gulf Council thinks they're going to vote it down. So, Mr. Banks mentioned that the vote for that amendment was 9 to 6 and that's strong support. Well, had Louisiana voted how they had been voting in previous it was have been 8 to 7 and it would have been one of those close votes just like it always had been. So, you know, I, I found it interesting to see how many times CCA was mentioned in the comments earlier and I think anybody would recognize that we've taken a wait and see approach on this. We've, we met with the secretary, and I talked to him the day of the announcement. We've, we've got a good rapport. We met with him and the governor later that week. We are committed to try and find a good solution to make this work.

And we're going to continue to do that. But going back to square one, really, which is where we would be with the Gulf Council is just not something' that any of us can afford to stomach. I mean you're talking' years and years of frustration. Amendment 39 was a good looking' piece of work when it first came out. After the Gulf Council got their hands on it for 5 years it, it was no good, it couldn't, and it was unviable. So, I could go on and on, I know I'm against the clock, my paper is filled with things I would like to say but I'll reserve those for a later day. Again, I thank you for your comments, we do very much look forward to working' with the department, we've got a great relationship with them in a number of ways, and we hope we can work through this one as well. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Second call for Johnathan Walker. Okay. That concludes the public comments on Agenda Items 13, a couple of these comments are strictly for, are, are also include 14 which, is Mr. Blanchet going to come up and complete that part now? So I'll formally read it. Agenda Item 14 is to hear an update on the red snapper season. Presenting, Mr. Harry Blanchet.

Mr. Harry Blanchet: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission. Let's see if I can get this thing working. Okay, that's the right one. Hmm, I show it here, I don't see it up there.

Mr. Harry Blanchet: There we go. Okay. You just have to push the button hard. This is a relatively brief update, we've had a recreational season that has been open since early in the year. This year was a little bit different because the feds actually agreed that we've got 9 miles off shore which is a nice benefit to some people, not so much as

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some people have pointed out in the western part of the state. So a little bit, I'm sorry for the spaghetti but I could not, I wanted to show as much detail as possible, where we are. This actually is through the 26<sup>th</sup> of June, so these are, these data have, include the information from the red snapper recreational private boat season. I don't know if this is going to show up or not, no, it's not. This year, the, the federal season typically is a time when we have our, most productive week. This year was not as productive as many other years has been. There was a lot of rough weather. It wasn't that people could not catch their two fish, it was that there weren't that many people that really wanted to buck that weather and go get those two fish. So as a result what you have there is the data for 2014 in the black, 2015 in the, I guess that's green and the red is 2016 and each of those numbers is the pounds landed by recreational fishermen through the same date. And, the two then go forward. So trying to estimate where we might be relative to where historically, we would normally be, this is our historic fraction of the overall recreational, allowable harvest. And so at 545,000 pounds through the 26<sup>th</sup>, you can see we're relatively close to our overall, average. For the, for our sector, they have been following very closely with where they were last year, when they also had an extended season. There's two more weeks of their season to go, they've run through, oh, I'm sorry, there's three more weeks of their season to go, they run through Week 28. And so our projections are that they will do a little bit better than they did last year, I'm sorry, not as good as they did last year. Oh, no, a little better than they did last year. And then we have, so that's our projection of that basically through the end of the year. I put them all together and here's where we stand compared to, the prior 2 years. The main

difference for 2014 of course is that much smaller, charter season and, but you can see that even so this year we're falling, we're a little bit behind both the other years. And this is, I, I will say that what we have here is one projection but depending upon what kind of, parameters you might put into your model, this is very much like showing just one model of the hurricane centers, projections where, you know, you really have a spaghetti and so I would say that unless, I would not put a whole lot of faith in the, total harvest being at exactly 1.116 million pounds on, at the middle of October. But we will be able to continue monitoring this, as we, as we progress forward and I'll be glad to take any questions.

Chairman Yakupzack: Harry, thank you for your presentation. Just as a point of clarity I have a question, I note that the, the numbers are different, in the, in the packet that was sent to us, Tuesday than, than are in the packet that we were given today.

Mr. Harry Blanchet: Correct.

Chairman Yakupzack: Did, did anything change other than you've got an additional –

Mr. Harry Blanchet: We actually –

Chairman Yakupzack: – week worth of data?

Mr. Harry Blanchet: – added one week's data.

Chairman Yakupzack: Okay. Thank you.

Commissioner Courville: Yes, Mr. Chairman, before we leave this, sir, I sort of viewed 13 and 14 together. I, I do have a couple of follow-up questions and, and it's really just a request more than, more than

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questions. Mr. Banks, at some point can we get sort of some clarification of what that independent data, looks like in your, in your budget estimate, and then to, to go again with my, question earlier, if we can find out perhaps even through a, a freedom of information request from the feds what they're currently spending on, on snapper. I'd also like a, you know, we heard some things today, perhaps, I know you guys have a full plate to deal with but, I would be interested in an analysis by whomever is the appropriate party, to get an analysis of what the Graves bill will, will do, potentially to the commercial and the for-hire industry. and then my last question, I think, actually no, I've got a couple, but my last request would be how soon will we see, a draft, if you will, of what this amendment at the Gulf Council's going to look like as far as a solution for the recreational snapper issue. I'd like to put a, yeah, the, the amendment was, open-ended, if you will, and open-ended amendments to me look like placeholders as opposed to, to tasks. I would like to know, and I'm not asking' you today to give me a number, I'd like to know how soon, perhaps maybe even at the next Commission meeting how soon will we see, that language, that it's going to look, and then what is it going to look like? ideally, and again, I know you guys, have a lot to do, I know this thing has a long sordid history, but I, I think, if, if inevitably we, we go that route, which I'm not suggesting one way or the other, it'd be good to know if it's an option then we need to know what it's going to look like. I would, I would be in favor of that. and, and then I heard today and, and maybe this isn't the setting for that but I heard a lot of tag discussion for the recreational folks, and perhaps we could have an update on what a tag system might look like, for the recreational folks if that's what it, what it appears that the commercial

sector is in favor of. I'd like for the public to have a chance to get their handle, and myself for that matter on what a tag program would actually look like. I've got my, my thoughts on it and, I'm all over the place but, somebody with some experience can, can share with us and the public what a tag program would actually look like. and I, I guess my last question is, we've heard a lot of statements by a lot of folks, the money fell from heaven tomorrow, to manage snapper, would that change this current department position? If it wasn't an unfunded mandate.

Secretary Melancon: If –

Chairman Yakupzack: Let's say, let's say Mr., Mr., the Honorable Mr. Bishop, I can't remember if he's a congressman or a senator so –

Secretary Melancon: He's, he's a congressman.

Chairman Yakupzack: – I don't want to mislabel him. If he said, no, I was just kidding', here's your money. Would that change, um how, how we view Congressman Graves' bill?

Secretary Melancon: If the Congress passed a law and it was put into effect and the money fell from the sky then that's what we would do, because that would be the law.

Commissioner Courville: Okay. So I, I'm not asking' for answers on all those other questions, Patrick, Mr., Mr. Banks, sorry, maybe, maybe next month, or something' like that. I didn't give you obviously adequate time to prepare for any of those.

Patrick Banks: Thank you.

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Commissioner Sunseri: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Yakupzack: Commissioner Sunseri?

Commissioner Sunseri: Thank, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, I was wondering, I know this is no action item or anything but I'm wondering if we could ask the department to maybe try to do something in maybe trying to get the groups together, the commercial fishing, the recreational fishing, the charter fishing people together, the department biologists and everything and get them in a room and see what might be able to come out of that, that could be good to go to the council with. I, I, you know, I, I premise this by saying I'm a solutions guy and, I, I think that there's something that could be hammered out where we could go to the council and make it happen. But you need to get the people in a room to go ahead and, and make it happen, and make, make this, because we don't have this Graves bill thing in hand. We got the council, that's who we've got to work with right now. So get the Louisiana guys in a room, along with whatever commissioners want to participate and, see, see what can come out of it that can be useful and to bring forward to the, the Gulf, Commission. That, that's a suggestion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you. Any other, question or discussion on Agenda Item No. 14? Moving forward we have Agenda Item 15, to set the November 2016 meeting date. Looks like the first Thursday of the month is, November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Is that, appear to be fine for everyone? Okay, so moving forward we're, we're going to let the minutes reflect that we're going to have the meeting on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, that's the first Thursday of the month. We now have,

Agenda Item No. 16, to receive public comment. I would like to remind you, that those of you who are going to leave early to, to please exit quietly so we can finish up this agenda. First up for public comment I've got Mr. Barry Rogers from Terrebonne Parish.

Mr. Barry Rogers: Good afternoon, Secretary, Commission members. I'm here to express concerns on the appointment of Bob Samanie to the Commission Board. He is the vice president of Lafitte Frozen Foods which has been known to import frozen shrimp and repack in Louisiana boxes. Louisiana, Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries and the Seafood Promotion Board has spent millions of dollars on promoting authentic Louisiana shrimp. I see a conflict of interest between someone that imports shrimp and the State of Louisiana which is trying to promote our business. I've also had comments and meetings with you and spoke with you and you have spoken to me as a fisherman from a processor that you hold my head down under water till I almost drown, you let me up for a breath of air.

Commissioner Samanie: *muffled noise*

Mr. Barry Rogers: Yes, you have.

Commissioner Samanie: No, I haven't.

Mr. Barry Rogers: Yes, you have. You might not remember but yes, you have. We are drowning. The shrimping industry is drowning. We have went through the worst year of brown shrimp season in history. We do not need someone like you on this Board that imports shrimp and puts it in Louisiana boxes. I'm not here to argue with you, I just have concerns.

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Commissioner Samanie: Well, do you have any proof or documentation –

Mr. Barry Rogers: The man that works on the back deck –

Commissioner Samanie: You're making' slanderous statements –

Mr. Barry Rogers: I'm not making' a – The man that works the back deck of my boat used to work your dock.

Commissioner Samanie: You'll have to prove this one.

Chairman Yakupzack: Come on, let's do it.

Commissioner Samanie: Yeah.

Mr. Barry Rogers: I'm sorry, it's just the way I feel. I have concerns. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. Rogers. Louisiana Shrimp Association, Acy Cooper. Again, we're going to limit comments to still on our 3 minute time.

Acy Cooper: How you doing'? Acy Cooper, Louisiana Shrimp Association. I have a lot, a lot of people calling' me and like I have to do what I have to do. A lot of fishermen are worried about which way ya'll going to vote when it comes time to open and close seasons. Last year we had a problem with open earlier, close late and they wanted the season open early and, later. And the processors wanted to open early. So, and they kinda feel that, and I aren't got nothing' against you personally, Mr. Bobby, that with that influence on the panel it may lean a certain way. So hopefully the rest of ya'll take everybody's in account when we ask, the fishermen come up and ask about a later date, take it into account. Just don't let

one may sway ya'll vote one way or the other. And that's the main concern that they have. That last year we did have a big problem, they all wanted it closed, the fishermen wanted to go longer, the processors wanted to open early because of the smaller shrimp. They held it back, that did it good and it worked out right. So that's the main thing that we're concerned about. It doesn't sway ya'll vote and lean towards the wrong way. Thank ya'll.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. Cooper. Next up, Dean Blanchard. Dean Blanchard? Next up, Warren Delacroix. State your name and address, please.

Warren Delacroix: Warren Delacroix, 1012 Helois, Louisiana. I happen to be – Mr. Melancon, secretary and Members of the Commission, thank ya'll for letting' me speak. I happen to be a member of the Louisiana Crab Task Force, I'd like to put a comment on a couple of different issues. First off, while Mr. Cresson is still here, if he's still present with the CCA we've had some different discussions as ya'll know with the Crab Task Force and, and issues about over fishing' and the stock assessment. I'd like to open Wildlife and Fisheries and the secretary and Mr. Cresson to give us some type, and even you, Mr. Sunseri with the Oyster Fisheries some type of fin, finfish fishery, drum or sheepshead via trammel net or haul seine and I'm not asking' for it immediately but just get the Commission to come on board and have a group conversation. You said you are, you are, you know, you, you're trying', you'd like to get everybody to get along but that's an issue that needs to be resolved for your industry, especially with the oyster fishermen and especially our industry with the crab fishermen. Another thing I want to bring up is the recent appointment of Mr. Samanie to

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the Commission. He works for Lafitte Frozen Foods, Mr. Paul Poon who has been in violation several times of repacking' processed, foreign shrimp in domestic boxes. He was basically run out of Lafitte, now he's in Lafitte in Saint Bernard Parish doing' the same thing and I don't think it's a, it's a good deal for the State of Louisiana for this Board or the commercial fishermen or anybody in here to have somebody like that represent our industry and the fishermen of the state of Louisiana. Thank you.

Secretary Melancon: Mister, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman Yakupzack: Secretary Melancon,

Secretary Melancon: I've had reports of, such comments would be made this week and I made several calls around to people to ask about what was being alleged. I found that it seems that the, the accusations came from a, one source, the industry has been bifurcated or worse over the years. Unless somebody brings some documents that are notarized to attest to what the accusations are I, I'll have to just say that I did not get a bad report. I did find out from one shrimp processor and their competitor that Mr., Samanie's company was one of the largest shrimp processors in the state of Louisiana, if not on the Gulf Coast, was heavily involved in, dollar wise, in funding the anti-dumping suits in the years past. it kinda, I guess the question that I, that it puts in my mind is how would a person who's putting money to defend importation, against im, illegal importations or why would it be putting money into defending themselves if they're doing the opposite? But I, I think that, it's, it's a sad day that, this kind of thing comes to the Commission but at the same time, if there's documentation, I think that needs to be presented and Mr. Samanie

at some point in time will be able to, have a clear, clear, clear chance at serving if it's just alleged rumors. Thank you.

Commissioner Samanie: Thank you, Mr. Melancon.

Chairman Yakupzack : the final card that I have here, unless, I, Mr. Blanchard appears to be gone, I don't see him in the crowd, the final card I have is Ron, Mr. Ronald Coco from Moreauville, Louisiana with regard to Spring, Spring Bayou Wildlife Management Area –

Mr. Ronald Coco: Yeah. Secretary, Commissioners.

Chairman Yakupzack: You got 3 minutes. You're the last one.

Mr. Ronald Coco: I'm going to cut it short, I'm going to cut it short. Spring Bayou has a team of, Spring Bayou Restoration Team that was formed in 2007. None of ya'll was on the Commission at that time. This is a varied group of people that get involved and they're very involved in Spring Bayou. When Spring Bayou was going' down after the high water of '73 they got involved with it. First then they came Wildlife and Fish, they wanted to do draw downs. They were actually organized as a group of citizens against the draw down program. They came over here and challenged Wildlife and Fisheries to put grass carp. They worked with them, they still got denied, and they kept comin' back until grass carps were finally put into Spring Bayou. At the present date over 60,000 grass carps have been put in Spring Bayou. The sprayin' has continually gone and it has actually opened up the whole complex. There's 12, over 12,000 acres of land, over 40 percent in the summertime is usually water. In the

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wintertime, spring it's actually more. The problem now is alligators... People are fishin' in there. In the last 3 years the area has developed a lot. Years ago there was at least 25 bass tournaments on the lake, on the whole complex. It went down to one. The National Guard was the only one that's stayed with Spring Bayou. This year we went up to six tournaments. The fishin' was excellent in there, people were fishin' bass, brim, the Wildlife and Fisheries have actually stocked it with bass and brim also. But the problem is now the alligator population has spread all over this thing. People are going' fishing', if you're going to cast your line out there you better draw it in quick if you got a fish on the end of it because it won't get back to your boat. Just like you do with the alligators nowadays, these alligators are friendly. They'll come up right against the boat and stay there. I think at the present time, how many times you been, how many times you get them? Probably a hundred tags. People open frog season and go out there, they stop their boats, wait a few minutes, turn the light on, they count as many as 40 to 50 alligators in one little search, so it's very over populated. And they would like to see if the Wildlife and Fisheries could go in there and even make an estimate. They did call and told 'me that no surveys had ever been made in the area, all surveys are made down south. So this doesn't have nothing' to do with the coast, this has to do with Central Louisiana and they would like to see if the season could be extended or give more tags out. Actually by the first week of the season people are limited out over there. That's how big the population is. Now these people will be coming to the meeting. I was asked – They had a meeting last night and I was asked to come and bring this before ya'll. They will be coming' and, they are a determined group of people, they're not

going to give up. So I mean the season's over with right now, it's something' to start thinking' about, something' needs to be done with this, population of alligators in this area. And so I mean ya'll got plenty of time to think about it and it'll be coming', like I said, they'll be coming' over here and coming' before the Commission to talk more about it.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. –

Mr. Ronald Coco: And, and another thing, Johnathan brought up was the chronic, chronic waste disease, we working' to have a meeting' in Avoyelles Parish at the Ag Building on Highway 1. And we work with LSU and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and any other people that want to get involved in it. There was one held in Alexandria but it was held like 2:00 in the afternoon, people couldn't attend. So this one will be scheduled for a nighttime meeting. And it'll be targeted for Central Louisiana people to come in so to tell the people more about the diseases and hog control and everything also. And I will be letting you know and tell everyone about it and if ya'll want to come to it ya'll more than welcome to come to it, also.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. Coco, I think Commissioner Courville has –

Commissioner Courville: Mr. Chairman, uh –

Chairman Yakupzack: – more questions.

Commissioner Courville: – I might weigh in on your, alligator, request, have you made a formal request of the department for a, a, a consideration –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: They called –

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Mr. Ronald Cocoa: for an alligator –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: several people, they were transferred back and forth to several different people in Wildlife and Fisheries.

Commissioner Courville: Let me, let me make a suggestion, obviously you've got staff here that can do a fine job of it as well but I would, so tag allocations occurring currently –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Mm hmm.

Commissioner Courville: so if you have a desire to increase your tag allocation in that region it needs to be done now.

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Now? Okay.

Commissioner Courville: I would recommend that if you, have a chance to maybe visit with Mr. Edmond Mouton –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Yeah.

Commissioner Courville: and then he can direct you –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: We did, we did talk to Mr. Mouton.

Commissioner Courville: He's in New Iberia but, if you wait till August, the August Commission meeting you, you might be a little bit behind schedule so, uh –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: They're waiting' for me to call them back to give them some kind of a response because, I mean they rang me twice since I've been here.

Commissioner Courville: I would, I would recommend that you make a move on it now.

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Okay, I'll get with them on that.

Commissioner Courville: Because August will probably be too late because –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Okay.

Commissioner Courville: those tags will have already been allocated and assigned and it's a, it can be a challenge.

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: They, they started a kayak program in the thing, they have, one, it goes up to 15 mile kayak trips on the, on the whole complex. When they first started people were going' in, kids were going' in and now the people are pulling' out, it's too many alligators in the complex.

Commissioner Courville: One, one –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: They don't want to bring their kids up in there with the alligators, with the size of the alligators they got up in there.

Commissioner Courville: One thing I do want to comment on and applaud the department, for their response in a lot of, in an increase in alligator, nuisance calls if you will based on some, you know, obvious, the obvious activities that have occurred in the news. Fortunately, for Louisianans we've learned how to sort of adapt and live – Because we live in the midst of a lot of alligator habitat and there's a lot of folks that are making' a lot of, knee jerk type reactions. They see one and, and they, they all of a sudden are fearing' for their lives. The department has done a, an excellent job and if I'm not mistaken recently put out a press release on how to deal with alligator encounters.

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That said, and I'm not saying I'm advocating for or against it, but, a re-evaluation of, of the alligator population in the Spring Bayou area would probably be appropriate. Um –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Well, well that's what they wanted. If they could have somebody come in there and make an estimate of the alligators and study –

Commissioner Courville: And –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: study the situation and see what the problem is.

Commissioner Courville: And, and it may or may not result in an increase –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Yeah.

Commissioner Courville: in tag allocation but what I would hope the department would not do, and I've got the utmost confidence that they won't do it, is have a, a knee jerk type reaction, and have these incredible tag increases, the alligator recovery is a success story. Are there some nuisance ones? Absolutely. Or some inappropriate behaviors by individuals, almost taming them? Absolutely that happens. So we've got to find that balance. But at a minimum I have the utmost confidence that the department's staff will do a fair assessment and it may or may not result in a tag increase.

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: But they just, they just, uh –

Commissioner Courville: But you need to do it now.

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Well they just harvested one or killed one, 11-1/2 foot in a man's front yard.

Commissioner Courville: There is a good nuisance program in addition to –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Yeah.

Commissioner Courville: to potential increase in tag allocation. So, like I said, I think the department has the tools to address safety concerns of, of human life. But it, it, if you're going to make a move, you need to do it now.

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: It has to be now because August is coming' up.

Commissioner Courville: You, you're going to, you won't have time if you wait till the August –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: I know.

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Commission.

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: I mean –

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: I, I would do it now.

Mr. Ronald Cocoa: Okay. All right. Thank you.

Chairman Yakupzack: Thank you, Mr. Co, Coco. Any further comment? With that I'll take a motion to adjourn.

Captain Samanie: So moved.

Chairman Yakupzack: Motion moved by Captain Samanie.

Commissioner Sunseri: Seconded.

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Chairman Yakupzack: Meeting adjourned.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

# Cervid Carcass Importation Ban

#### A. Definitions

*Cervid*—any animal of the family *Cervidae* including but not limited to white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk, moose, caribou, fallow deer, axis deer, sika deer, red deer, and reindeer.

B. No person shall import, transport or possess any cervid carcass or part of a cervid carcass originating outside of Louisiana, except: deboned meat, antlers, clean skull plates with antlers, cleaned skulls without tissue attached, capes, tanned hides, finished taxidermy mounts and cleaned cervid teeth. Approved parts or deboned meat transported from other states must be legally possessed from the state it was taken. Approved parts and deboned meat from other states must contain a possession tag with the hunter's name, out-of-state license number (if required), address, species, date and location (county and state) of harvest. All cervids transported into or through this state in violation of the provisions of this ban shall be seized and disposed of in accordance with Wildlife and Fisheries Commission and Department of Wildlife and Fisheries rules and regulations.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with the Louisiana Constitution, Article IX, Section 7, R.S. 56:1, R.S. 56:5, R.S. 56:6(10), (13) and (15), R.S. 56:20, R.S. 56:112, R.S. 56:116.1 and R.S. 56:171 et seq.

# Chronic Wasting Disease

- CWD is a neurodegenerative disease affecting Cervids.
- Prions – Mutated proteins that are shed into the environment.
- Disease persists in the environment without a host.
- One to two years before animals become symptomatic.
- 100% fatal in Cervids.
- Prevention is the only method of defense.
- Post mortem testing only.
- 24 states and 2 Canadian Provinces infected.

# LDWF CWD Response

- Importation ban for captive cervids.
- Testing.
  - Tested over 7,000 cervids in Louisiana dating back to 2002.
- Proposed Carcass Importation Ban (2016)
  - Arkansas and Texas are the latest states to test positive.
  - 35 of 50 States have a carcass importation ban.
  - 22 of 29 Eastern States.

## DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

### Extended Falconry for Rails and Gallinule

#### Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

#### Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

In accordance with the emergency provisions of R.S. 49:953 of the Administrative Procedure Act, and under authority of R.S. 56:115, the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission hereby adopts the following Emergency Rule.

The Extended Falconry season for rails and gallinule during the 2016-2017 hunting season shall be as follows:

<b>Rails and Gallinule</b>	<b>Nov. <del>21</del> - Jan. 31</b>
----------------------------	-------------------------------------

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service establish the framework for all migratory species and the previously adopted season date is outside of the allowable framework. This date change is necessary in order to establish this season within the allowable framework.

The season dates, bag limits and shooting hours will become effective November 1, 2016.

Bart Yakupzack

Chairman

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The Extended Falconry season for rails and gallinule during the 2016-2017 hunting season shall be as follows:

<b>Rails and Gallinule</b>	<b>Nov. 1 - Jan. 31</b>
----------------------------	-------------------------

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service establish the framework for all migratory species and the previously adopted season date is outside of the allowable framework. This date change is necessary in order to establish this season within the allowable framework.

The season dates, bag limits and shooting hours will become effective November 1, 2016.

**Bart Yakupzack**

**Chairman**

## **NOTICE OF INTENT**

**Department of Wildlife and Fisheries**

**Wildlife and Fisheries Commission**

### **Blue Crab Harvest Regulations (LAC 76:VII.346)**

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950 et. seq., and through the authority granted in R.S. 56:6(25)(a), that the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission proposes to prohibit the commercial harvest of blue crabs and the use of all crab traps during a thirty day period for the years 2017, 2018, and 2019 and restrict the commercial harvest of immature female blue crabs for the years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

All crab traps remaining in state waters during the closure period shall be presumed to be engaged in active fishing and thus considered illegal.

## **Title 76**

### **WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES**

#### **Part VII. Fish and Other Aquatic Life**

##### **Chapter 3. Saltwater Sport and Commercial Fishery**

##### **§346. Blue Crab Seasonal Closure and Restriction of Immature Female Harvest**

The commercial harvest of blue crabs and the use of all crab traps are prohibited for a 30 day period beginning on the third Monday in February for the years 2017, 2018, and 2019. All crab traps remaining in state waters during the closure period shall be presumed to be engaged in active fishing and thus considered illegal.

There shall be no commercial harvest of immature female blue crabs for the years 2017, 2018 and 2019 except when an immature female is in the premolt stage and is being held for processing as soft crabs or sold to a processor for the making of soft crabs. Obvious signs such crabs are in premolt stage shall include they are no further from molting than having a white line on the back paddle fin, which is recognized by the crab industry as a premolt stage. However, a legally licensed commercial crab fisherman may have in his possession an incidental take of immature female crabs in an amount not to exceed 2 percent of the total number of crabs in his possession. To determine whether the total number of crabs in possession violates this subsection, the enforcement agent shall take a random sample of 50 crabs from each crate or group of crabs equivalent to one crate. If more than 2 percent of the crabs in that 50 crab random sample are immature female crabs, the entire number of crabs in that crate or group of crabs equivalent to one crate shall be considered to be in violation. Crabs in a

work box, defined as a standard crab crate as used by a commercial crab fisherman aboard the vessel to sort or cull undersized crabs and/or immature female crabs from the harvest in order to obtain a legal catch, shall not be subject to the immature female restriction while held aboard the vessel and the fisherman is actively fishing. Commercial crab fishermen shall be allowed to have in possession aboard the vessel, either one work box, if not using a grader, or two work boxes under the grader, if using a grader. An immature female crab, also known as a "maiden" or "V-bottom" crab, can be identified as having a triangular shaped apron on her abdomen. A mature female crab can be identified as having a dome shaped apron on her abdomen.

Violation of any provision of this Section constitutes a class two violation.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S.

56:6(25)(a), 56:8, 56:32, 56:56(A)(5), 56:320(B)(3), 56:326(A)(2), 56:315, 56:332(E)(1) and 56:355.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission LR ##:##.

The secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is authorized to take any and all necessary steps on behalf of the Commission to promulgate and effectuate this Notice of Intent

and final Rule, including but not limited to, the filing of the Fiscal and Economic Impact statement, the filing of the Notice of Intent and final Rule and the preparation of reports and correspondence to other agencies of government.

#### **Family Impact Statement**

In accordance with Act 1183 of 1999 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission hereby issues its Family Impact Statement in connection with the preceding Notice of Intent. This Notice of Intent will have no impact on the six criteria set out at R.S. 49:972(B).

#### **Poverty Impact Statement**

The proposed rulemaking will have no impact on poverty as described in R.S.49:973.

#### **Provider Impact Statement**

This Rule has no known impact on providers as described in HCR 170 of 2014.

#### **Public Comments**

Written comments may be addressed to Jeff Marx, Marine Fisheries Biologist, 2415 Darnall Rd., New Iberia, LA 70560, or email [jmarx@wlf.la.gov](mailto:jmarx@wlf.la.gov) prior to September 1, 2016.

Bart R. Yakupzack  
Chairman



# **Blue Crab Seasonal Closure and Restriction of Immature Female Harvest**

**LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION**

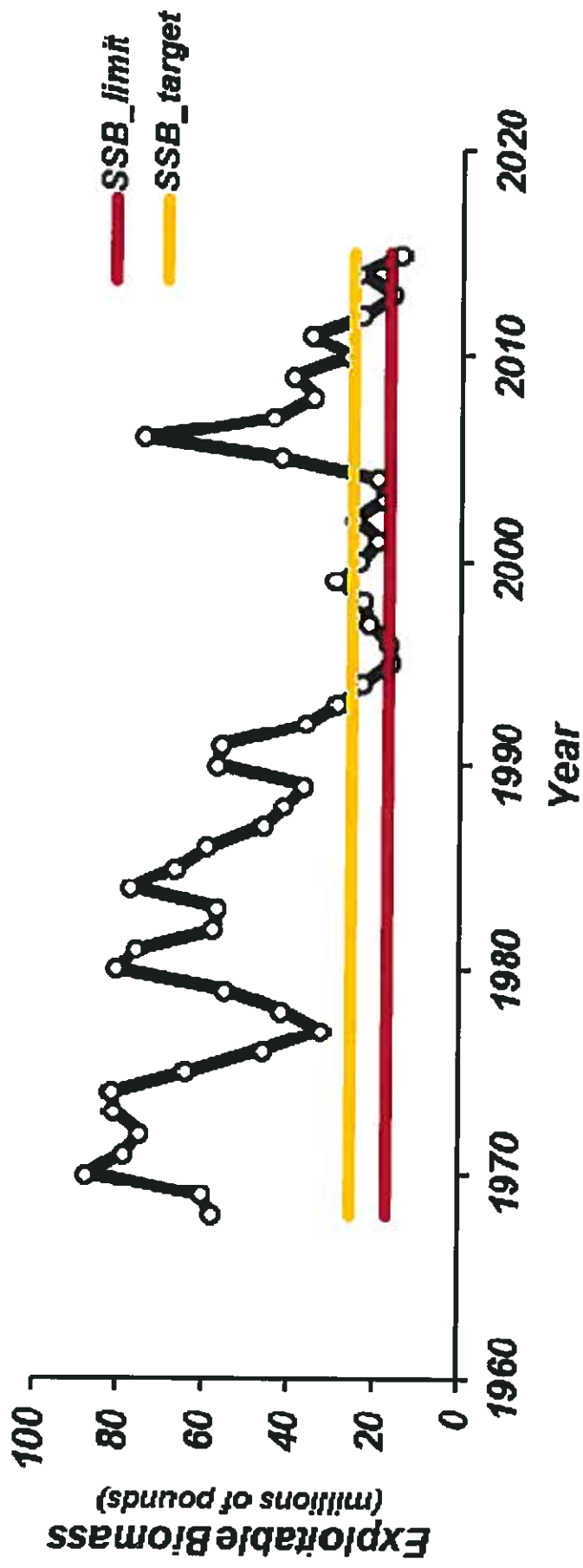
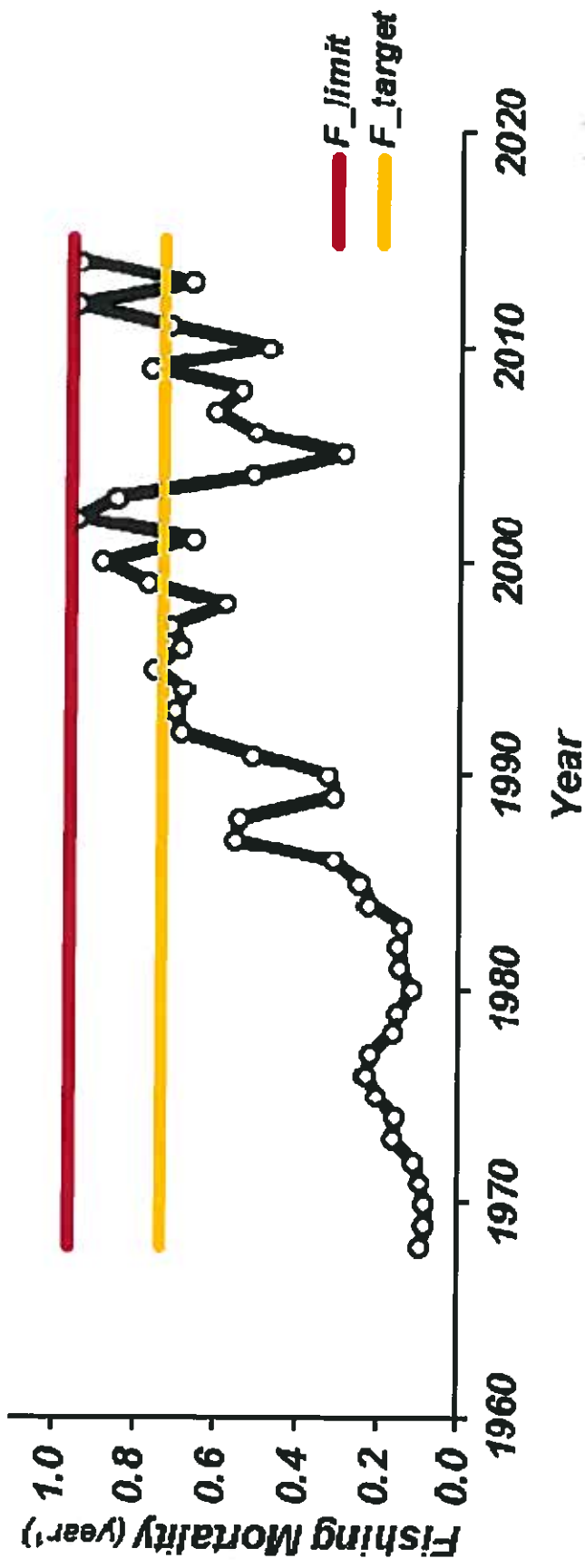
**July 7, 2016  
Baton Rouge, LA**

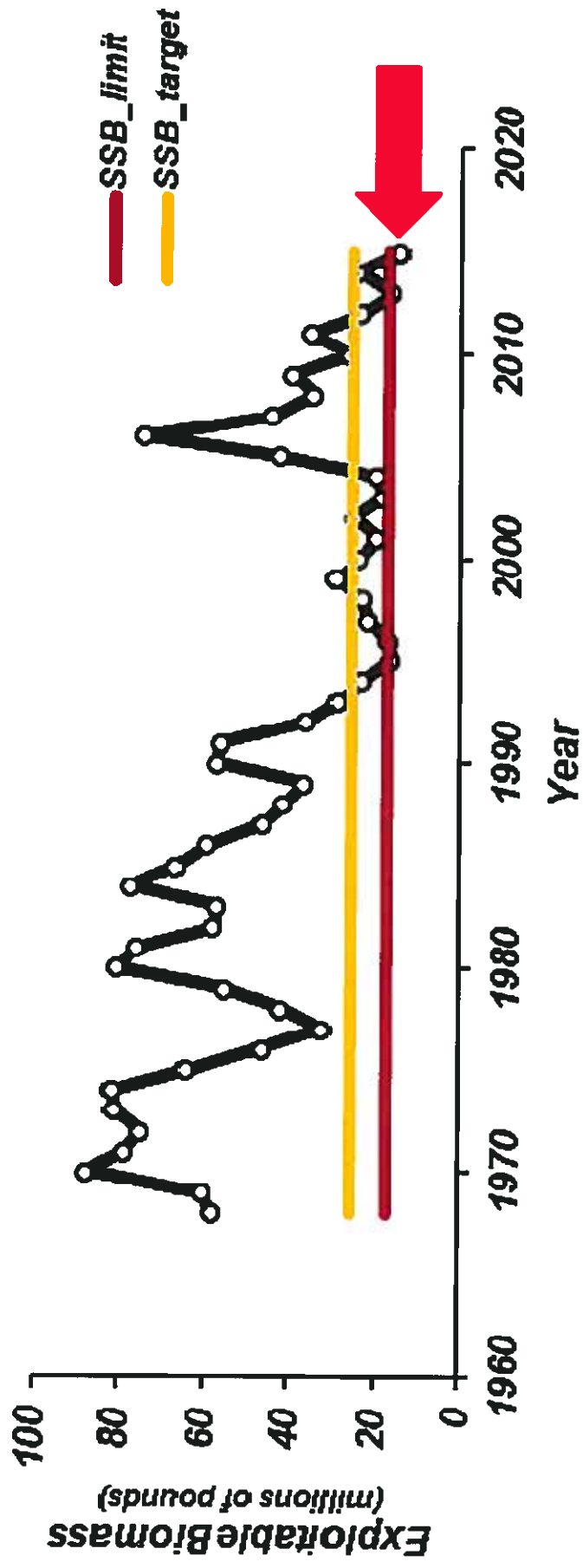
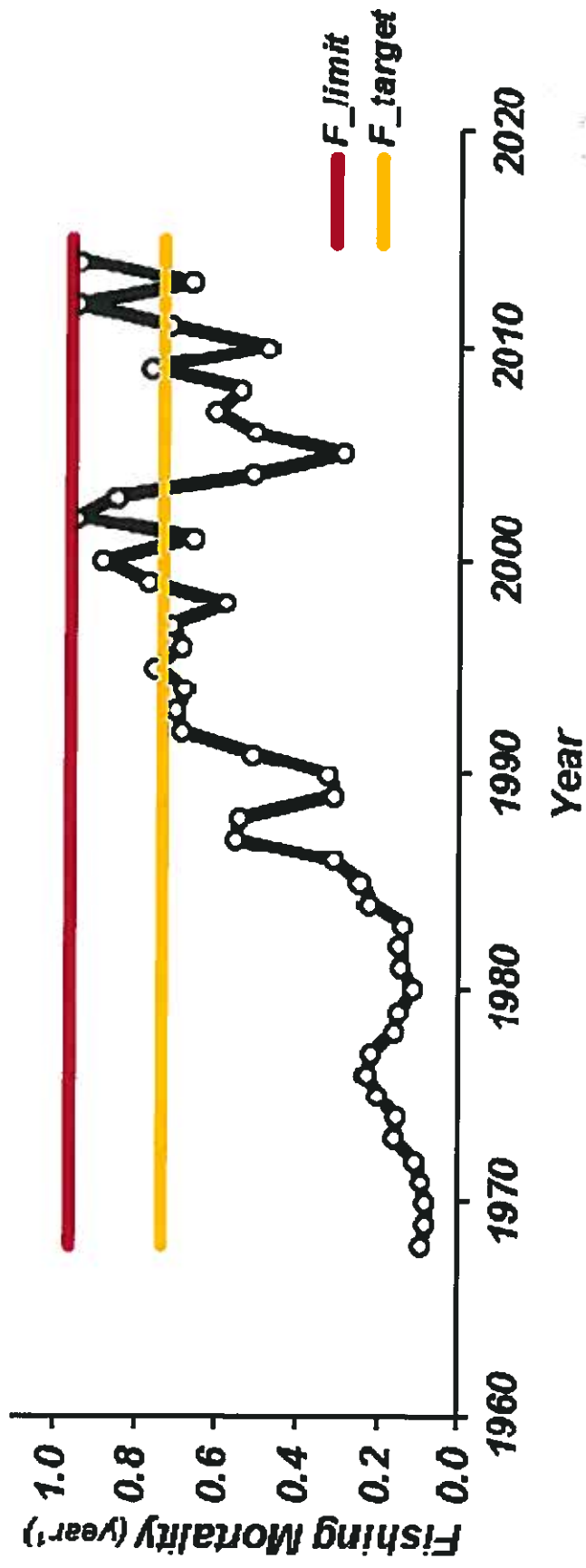
# THE PROBLEM

## 2016 Blue Crab Stock Assessment:

1. Very close to overfishing benchmark.
2. Crossed the overfished benchmark.
3. Data is through year 2015.







# POLICY

- Should the fishing mortality or exploitable biomass exceed the overfished or overfishing limit...
- LDWF will bring to the Commission a series of management options for the Commission to review and act upon.



# POLICY

- Options for review and action shall include provisions for emergency closures, time based closures, and spatial closures.



## AUTHORITY IN 56:6(25)(a)

Shall promulgate rules and regulations, subject to the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, to set seasons, times, places, size limits, quotas, daily take, and possession limits, based upon biological and technical data, for all wildlife and fish.



# MANAGEMENT ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Closure of the commercial and trap fishery for 30 days beginning on the third Monday in February.
2. Restrict immature female harvest.
3. Both actions would be for years 2017, 2018 and 2019.



# EFFECTS OF CLOSURE

1. Last 3 years: 41.2 M pounds avg. landings.
2. A 30 day closure could result in an approximate 3% immediate reduction in landings (1.2 M pounds).
3. Crabs would still be available to fishery later in the year.



# CLOSURE TIMING

YEAR	ASH WED.	EASTER	SEASON CLOSE	SEASON REOPEN	LENT FISHING DAYS
2017	Mar. 1	Apr. 16	Feb. 20	Mar. 21	26
2018	Feb. 14	Apr. 1	Feb. 19	Mar. 20	19
2019	Mar. 6	Apr. 21	Feb. 18	Mar. 19	34

LDWLF has authority to collect derelict crab traps for a 16 day consecutive period from February 1 – March 31.



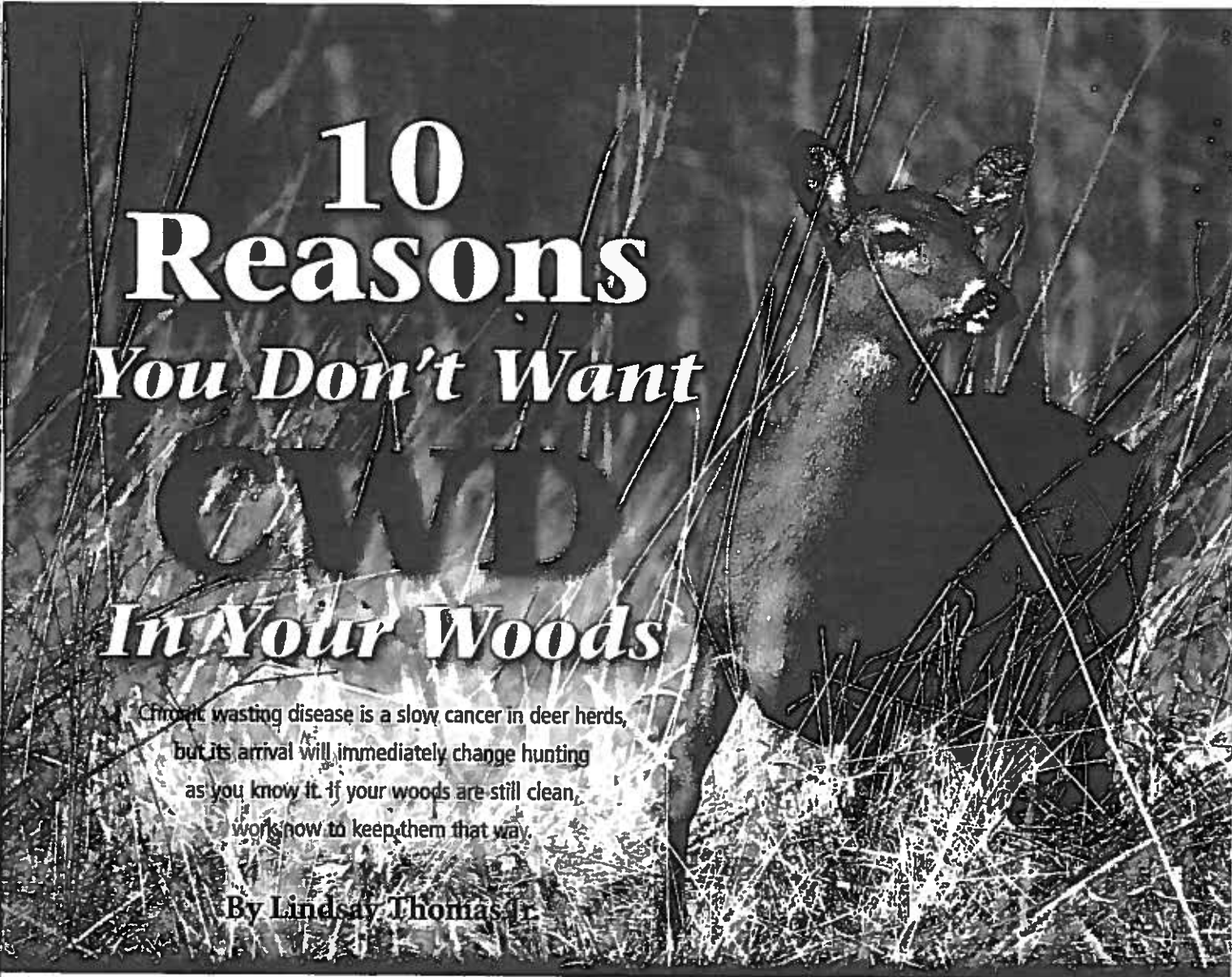
# EFFECTS OF RESTRICTING IMMATURE FEMALE HARVEST

1. A ban on immature female harvest could reduce landings approximately 5% (2 M pounds).
2. No effect on busters/peelers.
3. Crabs would still be available to fishery upon reaching maturity.





# QUESTIONS?



# 10 Reasons *You Don't Want* CWD *In Your Woods*

Chronic wasting disease is a slow cancer in deer herds, but its arrival will immediately change hunting as you know it. If your woods are still clean, work now to keep them that way.

By Lindsay Thomas Jr.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a serious threat to the future of deer hunting. Yet, there are many hunters who don't understand or appreciate the threat, who feel it is not something they have to worry about because it is far away from their woods, or who confuse it with other diseases. That's why it's important for all deer hunters — especially those who have not yet felt the impact of CWD or who live far from any outbreak areas — to learn what is really happening right now to those who have the misfortune of being affected.

There is much confusion between CWD and hemorrhagic disease (EHD and bluetongue virus). EHD and bluetongue are serious matters in their own right, and their impact is more rapid, more visible and more dramatic. Deer carcasses pile up quickly in outbreak areas. By contrast, CWD is a slow poison, building over time, taking months or years to kill indi-

vidual deer that are spreading the infection as they slowly die. Unlike the EHD and bluetongue viruses transmitted by insects, the CWD blight is steadily growing with no breaks, no recovery periods, no survivors, and no resulting immunity. The known impact sites for CWD in wild deer or elk currently include 20 states and two Canadian provinces, a list that has been growing recently. Minnesota and Maryland discovered CWD in free-roaming deer in 2011; Missouri in 2012; Pennsylvania in 2013; Iowa in 2014; and already this year, Michigan. We should be concerned about both EHD and CWD, but an important difference is that CWD can still be prevented from spreading to new areas. If you don't hunt in or near regions with CWD, be very happy, and support all efforts to prevent the disease's arrival near you. If it hits, the biological damage to the deer herd will be slow to build, but the

impact on you and your hunting will likely be immediate and significant.

Don't take my word for it. Just consider the actual impacts on hunters caught in the real world of a CWD outbreak.

Here are 10 very real reasons why you don't want CWD in your woods.

## 1 Necessary Deer Population Reduction

State wildlife agencies are working hard to prevent CWD entering their states, but when it is discovered and prevention is no longer possible, the goal shifts to intensive surveillance and containment. Sharpshooters, agency personnel and local hunters are enlisted to shoot and sample enough wild deer to reveal the prevalence and extent of the outbreak. Once this is known, a management plan is developed, and it usually involves reducing deer density in the Disease Management Zone

(DMZ) to reduce deer-to-deer contact and slow the spread. Emergency seasons may be opened, bonus tags may be doled out, and landowners may be asked to cooperate in thinning the one resource that may be the reason they own land – necessary steps that neither the agencies nor the hunters involved would choose if they didn't have to.

Missouri discovered its first case of CWD in Macon County in 2010 in a pair of adjacent captive deer facilities owned by the same deer farmer. It was discovered in 2012 in wild deer just outside these pens. The site is in Missouri's prime deer country. "This is the heart of some of our best deer hunting in the state," said Jason Sumners, deer project leader for the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC).

MDC moved quickly, as most states do, to drop wild deer numbers in a 30 square mile core area around the two deer farms. Sharpshooters entered private lands, and bonus tags were dispensed.

"Deer density was probably in the neighborhood of 35 to 40 per square mile before we started. Now, we're less than 10," Jason said. "A lot of the landowners in this area bought the land specifically for deer hunting, and it's a tough pill for them to swallow. In general they have been really, really cooperative, but they're not happy about it at all."

## 2 New Rules for Moving and Handling Venison

After you have killed a deer, you likely have a set of rituals you go through to reduce it to bag and prepare it for the dinner table. If CWD appears nearby, you can probably scrap all that and learn a new regime. It's possible that every deer you kill will have to be taken first to a mandatory check-station for sample collection. You'll be limited as to where you can take the carcass without first boning it out. Parts like the head may have to remain in the DMZ and other parts discarded at an approved location.

"I can't take a deer carcass out of the zone. I can't even take the head to a taxidermist outside the zone," said Rick Watts of Pennsylvania, who lives in a DMZ surrounding a deer farm in Adams County where CWD was discovered in 2012, one of three DMZs in Pennsylvania. "There was only one taxidermist in the zone who did European mounts, and he quit. He

CWD is a syndrome of the central nervous system in which the brain deteriorates. It is caused when normal proteins called "prions" become deformed. It incubates for an average of one to two years before symptoms appear, and during incubation it can be spread to other deer.



didn't want to have to deal with all the regulations and problems."

Rick now processes his own venison because his favorite processor is located outside the zone, and hunters who use commercial processors must use one that is located within the boundaries. "I live a mile from the edge of the zone, and the two butchers that are inside the zone are on the far side. They're further away from me than a couple of butchers that are outside the line."

Precautions and regulations like these complicate life for hunters, and they strain the relationship between hunters and their wildlife agencies, but the agencies are also in a tough position. There are no easy methods for containing CWD once it arrives, but inaction is not an option for anyone who cares about whitetails.

"I don't think the average hunter understands the potential impact of what this will do to their hunting," Rick said.

## 3 Loss of Basic Hunting Privileges

Rick's hunting has changed in other ways. He can no longer use supplemental feed or distribute minerals. These are common rules put in place in an effort to slow CWD's spread anywhere it appears, and QDMA supports agencies in taking steps like these. Bait, feed and mineral sites can congregate deer unnaturally, making it easier for them to swap saliva or come in contact with the urine or feces of other deer – all of which can transmit the infectious materials that cause CWD. In Rick's case, he can't hunt with urine-based lures or attractants either.

"We used to do trail-camera surveys

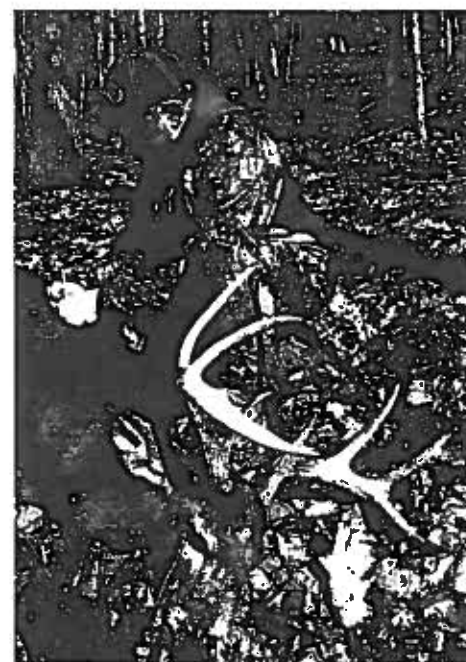
and I put out corn and minerals to bait the camera sites, so I can't do trail-camera surveys anymore," Rick said. "That affects our ability to get deer in front of cameras and monitor the herd. I also used to put out minerals and a mix of attractants in front of my cameras, but I'm not allowed to do that anymore, either."

## 4 Mature Bucks Not Encouraged

Research has revealed that CWD prevalence rates are highest in older bucks. For that reason, CWD containment plans often involve managing for a young deer age structure, the opposite of Quality Deer Management. Hunters are discouraged from attempting to build buck age structure by protecting yearling or middle-aged bucks – again, an unfortunate but prudent step in containing the disease.

In 2004, Missouri established an experimental 4-points-on-a-side antler restriction to protect yearling bucks in 29 northern counties. It was a success and was popular among hunters, so in 2008 the rule was expanded to 65 counties. When CWD was discovered in the middle of those 65 counties, the antler point regulation was repealed in the six-county DMZ. When a positive deer was found outside

>>>



Research has revealed that CWD prevalence rates are highest in mature bucks, likely because they cover more ground and directly contact more individual deer over their lifetimes than mature does. To help contain the disease, hunters in outbreak zones are discouraged from protecting young bucks or attempting to build buck age structure.

the DMZ this year, the regulation was repealed in 14 additional counties.

Jason Summers said the sex ratio of the deer harvest in the containment zone has shifted quickly back in favor of bucks, and pressure on yearling bucks is high once again.

Gary Bolhofner of Missouri, who hunts in the DMZ, said he hated to see the antler regulation repealed.

"The 4-point rule really helped," he said. "We were really seeing a lot of good bucks before it was dropped."

## 5 Economic Losses in the Region

When CWD is discovered in a new area, research has shown a subsequent decrease in hunting effort and time spent afield. Some hunters leave the woods because they don't see many deer anymore, a result of intentional efforts to reduce deer density and contain the disease. Some hunters leave the woods because of fears about eating venison from infected deer. Participation rates rebound in many areas after an initial period of alarm and confusion, which is often fueled by inaccuracies about the disease in local news media.

Once the facts come into focus, many hunters return to the woods, but not all.

In Wisconsin, hunting license sales fell sharply after CWD was discovered in 2001 and have remained about 5 percent below previous levels, or about 40,000 hunters short.

The initial decline in hunting participation after a CWD outbreak is significant enough to be felt in the local economy, even if the effect is short-lived. Spending by hunters on lodging, meals, gas, equipment, deer processing, and other goods and services drops off. License sales may also decline, impacting state wildlife agency budgets at a time when new expenses associated with controlling CWD are exploding.

Tennessee does not yet have CWD that we know of. But the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Tennessee conducted a study to estimate the economic impact of CWD if it should appear. They studied actual impacts on hunting participation in other states and applied them to known spending patterns by hunters in Tennessee. The researchers wrote in a final report: "When the direct effects are combined with effects from decreased purchases from supplying industries and service providers and effects from fewer expenditures with income losses, the total economic losses are estimated at \$98 million and 1,459 jobs."


This is to say nothing of the value of hunting land in the affected area. "I take calls from folks who want to know what's going on, who had been thinking about buying land in the area but are goosey about the long-term impacts of CWD," said Jason Summers. "I can't say there has been an impact on land value, but there's definitely a perception of, well, 'maybe I'll just go buy land somewhere else.'"

According to land brokers in the outbreak region, recreational land value inside Missouri's DMZ is currently \$200 to \$350 less per acre than outside the zone.

## 6 Your Tax and License Money Diverted


Even in states where CWD has not yet been detected, wildlife agencies are pouring tens of thousands of dollars into monitoring to ensure early detection if it arrives. In our 2010 Whitetail Report, QDMA surveyed agencies and found that states were spending a combined annual total of over \$1 million just for collecting

# What Do YOU Want to GROW?

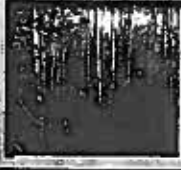



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and testing samples to monitor wild deer for CWD. I checked with my home state of Georgia, which is fortunately still a long way from the nearest known case of CWD, and learned the Georgia Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) currently spends around \$20,000 annually on CWD surveillance. The grand total since 2003 is nearly half a million dollars.

These costs rise dramatically after CWD enters the picture, as more intensive monitoring is needed to define the impact zone. Monitoring costs are joined by added expenses and manpower. In states with CWD, costs are running in the millions. While much of these funds used to come from the federal government, state funds also were being used. In 2012, federal funding for CWD surveillance was significantly reduced, and most costs must now be borne by the states, which already have precious little in their budgets for spending on programs that benefit sportsmen. Georgia WRD could do a lot to benefit sportsmen with the funds that are being spent on CWD surveillance, but the situation could be much worse. So far, none of those CWD samples collected in Georgia have tested positive.

7

#### No State Has Won The CWD Battle

After more than a decade and over \$49 million dollars spent fighting CWD in Wisconsin, prevalence rates in 15 impacted counties are climbing steadily. In Iowa County, for example, the percentage of adult bucks with CWD has climbed from 33 percent in 2012 to more than 40 percent.

"Even so, many of us continue to hunt deer in this increasingly diseased region," wrote hunter and freelance writer Patrick Durkin in a recent column for the Wisconsin State Journal. "It's where many of us learned to hunt deer, and it remains a beautiful land with abundant wildlife. We continue to cherish it, much as we would a stricken loved one. So, yes, the deer hunting tradition remains, but how long before it, too, falls to CWD?"

I asked that same question of Dr. John Fischer, a wildlife veterinarian and Director of the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study at the University of Georgia's College of Veterinary Medicine.

"In my opinion, it's too early to tell," he said. "In some areas, CWD prevalence in wild deer is approaching 50 percent. For a disease that's uniformly fatal, I think that

sooner or later you're going to start seeing some population impacts."

Those impacts may not include local extinctions, but they will include changes in herd structure, said Matt Dunfee, Director of the CWD Alliance. "A doe will live long enough to replace herself," he said, "but she's probably not going to survive to 4½ years old. Neither is a buck."

New York has one of the few encouraging stories. In 2005, CWD was discovered at two captive deer facilities in Oneida County. Surveillance was intensified, restrictions were placed on movement of

live and dead deer, and later that year two wild deer tested positive in the DMZ. Since then, despite thousands of wild deer tested statewide and particularly in the DMZ, no additional positives have been found. The containment zone was dissolved in 2010, but surveillance is ongoing. Because of potential environmental contamination with infectious CWD materials, even this might not be a victory.

"You don't go back to 'CWD free,'" said Dunfee, "It will affect a wildlife agency forever. Even in New York, they're not

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CWD free. The long-term effect of this will be felt, as far as we know, indefinitely."

#### 8 Prions Die Hard

Even if Wisconsin or any other state could somehow completely remove every sick deer in DMZs, infectious materials litter the battlefield. The abnormal proteins, called "prions," are shed by white-tails in feces, urine, saliva and blood, and they remain in carcasses. Unlike an EHD virus which cannot survive outside the body of its host, CWD-causing material can survive in soil and remain infectious for an as-yet undetermined amount of time.

"We know it can remain viable in the environment for a number of years," said Dr. Fischer. "We don't know how long."

In studies with captive elk, sick animals were removed and their pens cleaned and disinfected thoroughly, including removal and replacement of the dirt in the pen. But new animals introduced to the site became infected. If wild deer die out or are eradicated from DMZs, restocking will not likely be attempted for years without risk of new outbreaks.



There is no evidence CWD is transmissible to humans. Nevertheless, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urges caution, and many hunters in outbreak zones pay to have their harvested deer tested for CWD before they eat them.

#### 9 Are You Going to Eat That?

There is no evidence that CWD is transmissible to humans. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "To date, no strong evidence of CWD transmission to humans

has been reported."

Nevertheless, they urge caution because CWD is in the same group of disorders as mad cow disease, which can infect humans. The CDC suggests you be careful about how you process venison harvested in a DMZ and what parts of the deer you touch and eat.

Deer can carry CWD for months to years before symptoms become obvious. If CWD comes to your area, will you be concerned about eating venison? Or feeding it to your family? Do you want to have that on your mind when you are slicing out a pair of backstraps?

Many hunters in DMZs pay out of their own pockets to have their deer tested for CWD, and they wait until results are back before they eat the venison – the CDC also suggests this precautionary step, although experts emphasize the test is a surveillance tool and not a food-safety procedure. The cost of a test may vary from \$30 to \$50 or more, and results are usually available in a few weeks.

It's one more way that deer hunting has changed for these hunters and potentially one more added cost.

>>>

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**WHITETAIL**

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## There's Currently No Cure

Scientists are working to create a vaccine that can prevent CWD, but the work is slow. An initial trial provided tantalizing hope that a vaccine is possible. Four of five deer given an experimental vaccine still contracted and died of CWD when exposed, but the fifth deer remains CWD free – the “first partially successful vaccination for a prion disease in a species naturally at risk” according to researchers.

Still, it's likely to be years before a vaccine is actually developed. It will be extremely useful in cleaning captive deer herds of the disease, but its practicality for reducing or preventing CWD in wild herds will be questionable.

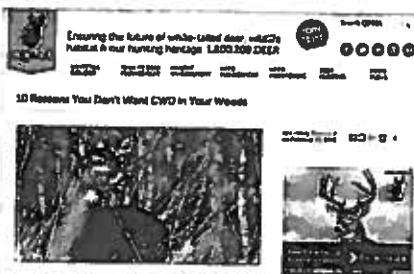
The bottom line, according to Dr. Fischer: Prevention is the only proven technique for managing diseases in free-ranging wildlife.

“Trying to play catch-up with a wildlife disease after it's already established is tough,” said Dr. Fischer. “There's no guarantee of success, but there is a guarantee it's going to be a very costly, long-term endeavor. If you don't have CWD where you hunt, you don't want it.”

Based on what we know about how

## Share This Article

It's important for more deer hunters who are not yet affected by CWD to be aware of the potential impacts should it be discovered in their woods. This article is available on QDMA.com so that our members can share it easily through social media and e-mail with their hunting friends. Help us distribute this information so that more deer hunters can understand the importance of prevention in stopping the spread of CWD.



the disease spreads, there are two primary methods for preventing the arrival of CWD in new areas.

First, stop the transportation of live deer and elk into and within your state.

Second, stop movement of parts of deer and elk from DMZs into your state.

“If you are a hunter in a state without

CWD, encourage your legislators and wildlife agency to put in place any regulations that can reduce the risk of it entering the state,” said Matt Dunfee. “Encourage them to spend money on sampling and monitoring to pick up the disease as quickly as you possibly can so they can jump on it when it does.”

I live and hunt in Georgia, where CWD has yet to be discovered, and I pray it never will be. For many hunters, CWD is easy to ignore or dismiss because it is still far away from their state's borders or because the impact is complex or difficult to quantify. But I urge you to learn all you can. Visit your state wildlife agency's website and read their CWD response plan. Contact them to learn more about their testing programs, and support them in their monitoring efforts – as well as their containment efforts should that day come. If nothing else, take one thing from this story: You don't want CWD in your woods.

About the Author: Lindsay Thomas Jr. is QDMA's Director of Communications and the Editor of *Quality Whitetails* magazine. Write to Lindsay at [Lthomas@qdma.com](mailto:Lthomas@qdma.com) and follow him on Twitter: @LindsayThomasJr

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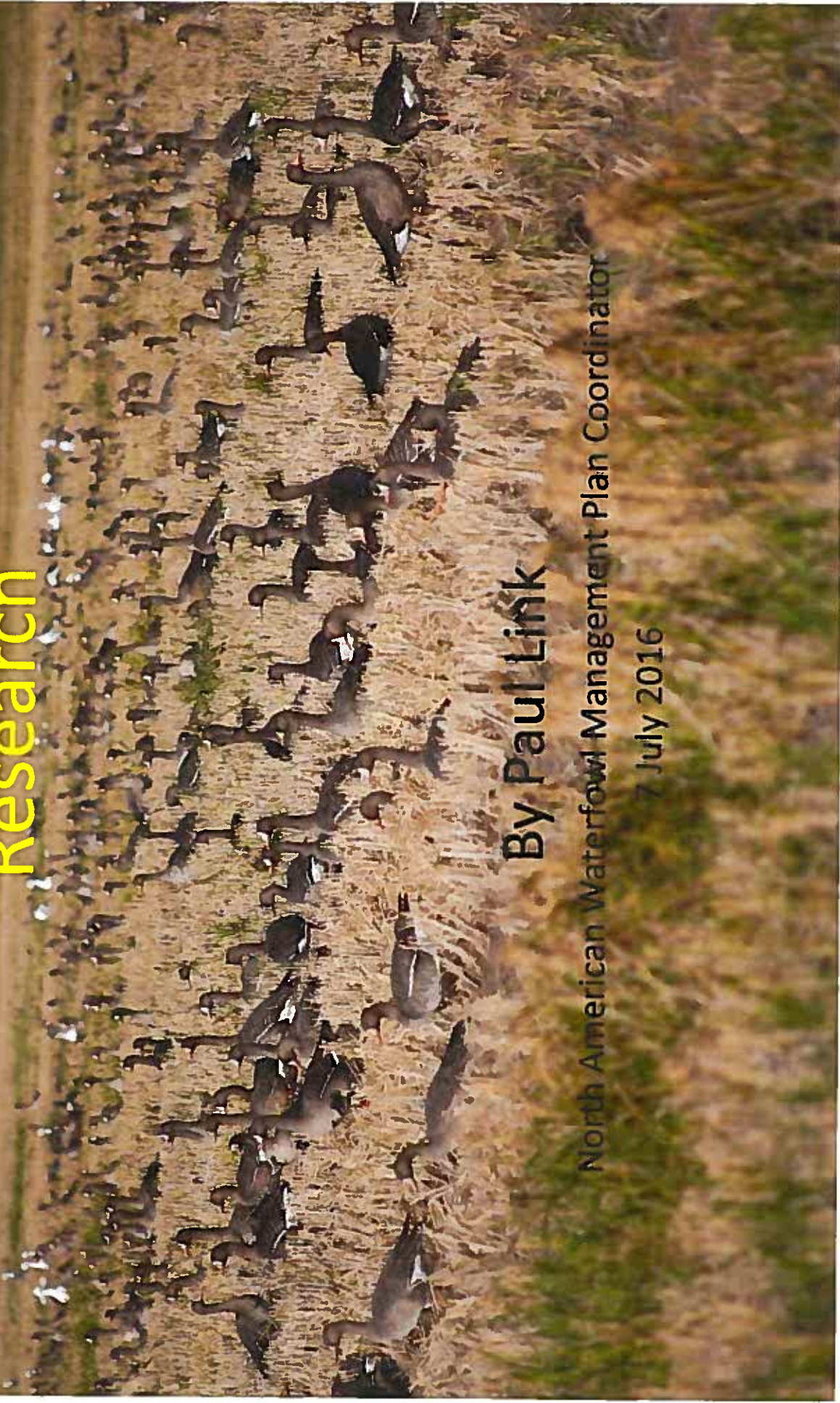
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# Update on White-fronted Goose Research

By Paul Link

North American Waterfowl Management Plan Coordinator

7 July 2016



## White-fronted Geese

	<u>Louisiana</u>	<u>Flyway</u>	<u>%</u>
1996-2000	105,000	132,000	80%
2001-2005	70,000	127,000	55%
2006-2010	103,000	225,000	46%
2011-2015	98,000	309,000	32%

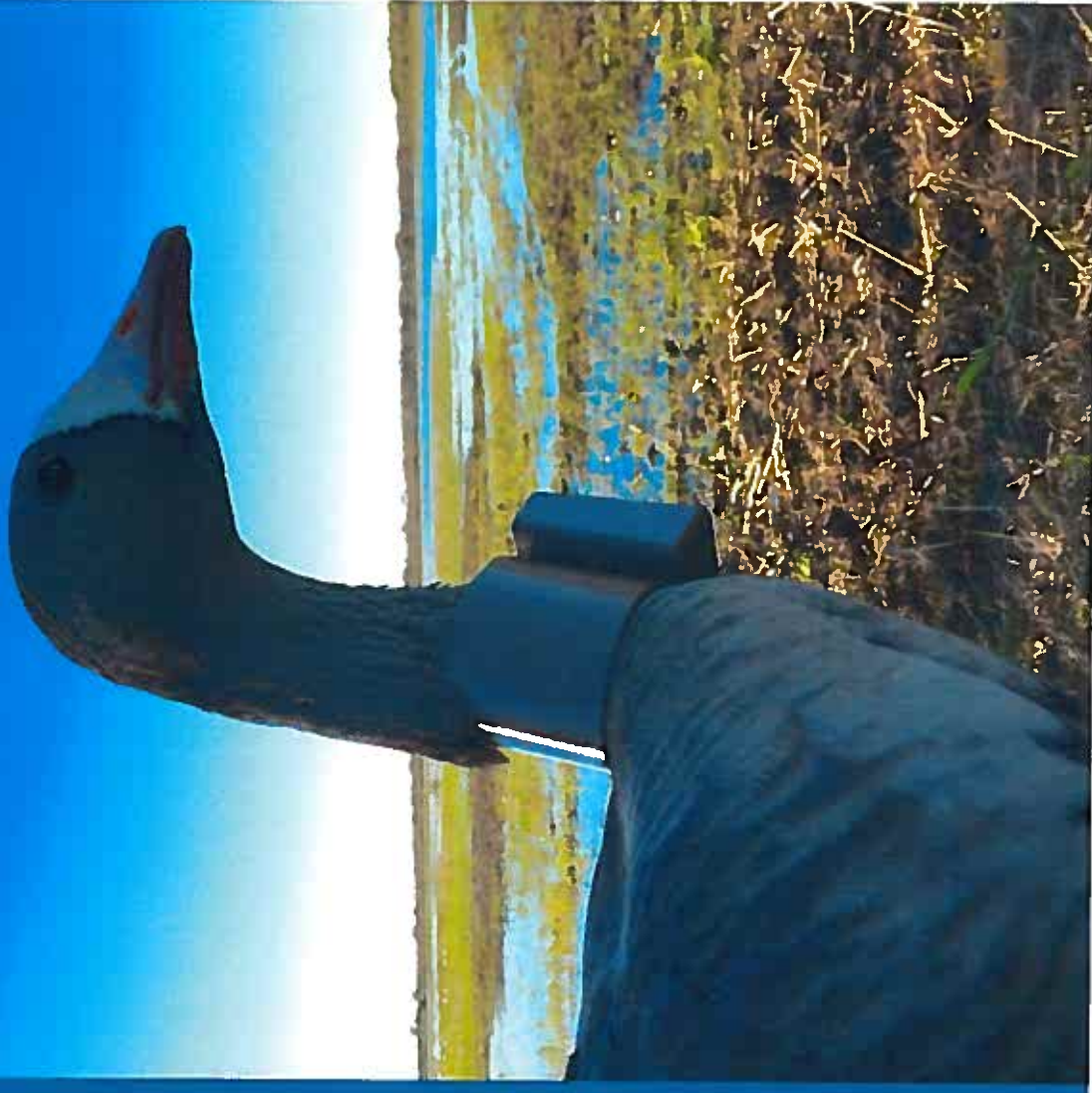
Counts in Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Tennessee and Kentucky are increasing.

Jan. 2015      59,000      386,000      15%

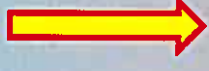
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  - Abiotic/ambient data logged
  - Altitude, bearing, speed, etc.
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  - Migration stopovers and duration, breeding range, philopatry, fidelity, etc.



Net Box







# Captures











# What does the data look like?

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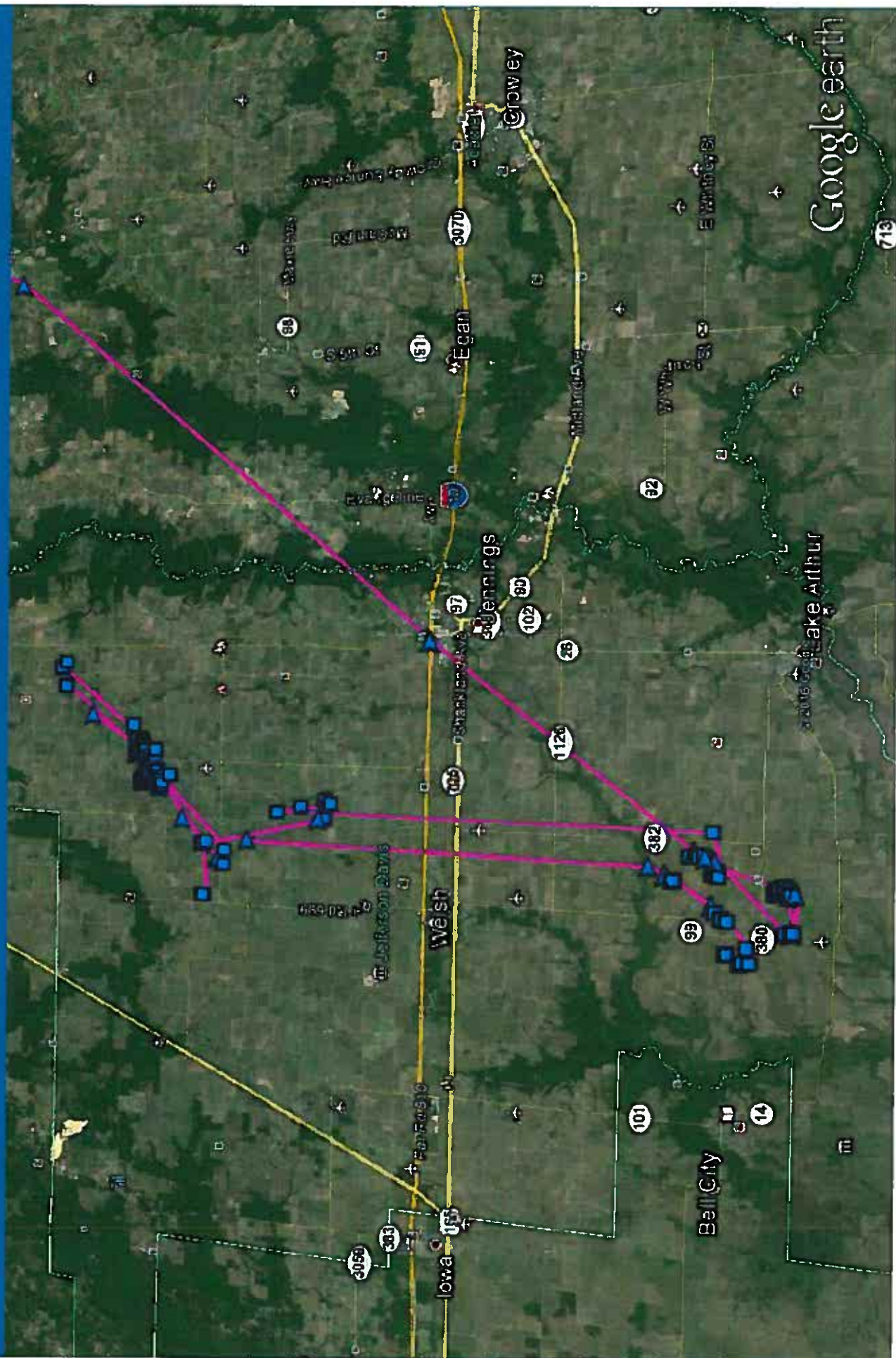
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X
	serial	GPS date	GPS utc	GPS YYYY-MM lat	lon	hdop	fix	cog	speed	alt	data_volt	solar_chai	solar_cour	nsats	vdop	geo	activity	inactivity	temperat	time_to_fix				
1	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	22:20:31	5/7/2016 22:20	52.64132	-105.861	1.7	3	145	0.5	450.6	4.06	6.04	0.01	32767	3	0	0	0	25.82	28			
2	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	22:04:39	5/7/2016 22:04	52.64074	-105.861	1.2	3	261	0.2	493.4	4.06	5.49	0.09	32767	2.5	0	0	0	28.74	13			
3	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	21:49:01	5/7/2016 21:49	52.64073	-105.861	1.3	3	197	0.1	497.3	4.06	5.35	0.04	32767	3.4	0	0	0	30.17	13			
4	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	21:33:24	5/7/2016 21:33	52.64074	-105.861	1.5	3	120	0.3	487.8	4.06	5.09	0.06	32767	5.2	0	0	0	25.92	9			
5	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	21:17:51	5/7/2016 21:17	52.64076	-105.861	1.6	3	294	0.2	490.9	4.06	4.98	0.03	32767	5.3	0	0	0	28.85	13			
6	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	21:02:13	5/7/2016 21:02	52.64072	-105.861	1.7	3	170	0.5	486.8	4.06	5.43	0.01	32767	3.2	0	0	0	28.97	13			
7	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	20:46:35	5/7/2016 20:46	52.64072	-105.861	1.2	3	18	0.3	493.8	4.06	5.14	0	32767	1.5	0	0	0	29.58	22			
8	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	20:30:48	5/7/2016 20:30	52.64076	-105.861	3.3	3	300	0.3	494.1	4.06	5.34	0	32767	2.5	0	0	0	28.79	11			
9	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	20:15:12	5/7/2016 20:15	52.64086	-105.861	1.7	3	117	0.3	491.5	4.06	6.08	0.06	32767	1.8	0	0	0	27.58	10			
10	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	19:59:38	5/7/2016 19:59	52.64087	-105.861	1.8	3	309	0.5	485	4.06	6.24	0	32767	2	0	0	0	25.69	18			
11	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	19:43:55	5/7/2016 19:43	52.64772	-105.783	1.9	3	200	21.3	515.1	4.06	4.5	0	32767	2.1	0	0	0	26.77	18			
12	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	19:28:13	5/7/2016 19:28	52.64602	-105.778	1.2	3	186	0.7	501.4	4.06	4.94	0	32767	1.5	0	0	0	26.16	35			
13	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	19:13:18	5/7/2016 19:13	52.64593	-105.778	1.6	3	28	1	507.1	4.07	3.9	0	32767	2.5	0	0	0	25.57	42			
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15	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	18:41:25	5/7/2016 18:41	52.64598	-105.777	1.6	3	37	0.2	506.1	4.06	5.53	0.02	32767	3.7	0	0	0	28.02	12			
16	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	18:25:48	5/7/2016 18:25	52.64597	-105.777	1.4	3	57	0.6	506.8	4.06	5.53	0.06	32767	2.9	0	0	0	27.7	7			
17	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	18:11:22	5/7/2016 18:11	52.64599	-105.777	1.2	3	92	0.3	505.7	4.07	0.63	4.09	32767	1.9	0	0	0	27.83	43			
18	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	17:55:13	5/7/2016 17:55	52.64585	-105.777	2.4	3	193	0.3	446.4	4.07	3.62	0	32767	3.1	0	0	0	26.77	34			
19	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	17:39:15	5/7/2016 17:39	52.646	-105.777	2.3	3	11	0.1	420.9	4.07	5.79	0.06	32767	3.1	0	0	0	26.58	15			
20	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	17:23:36	5/7/2016 17:23	52.64616	-105.777	1.8	3	20	0.2	509.4	4.06	5.62	0	32767	1.9	0	0	0	26.91	11			
21	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	17:09:04	5/7/2016 17:09	52.64617	-105.777	1.9	3	145	0.1	502.9	4.04	4.99	0	32767	2.5	0	0	0	27.33	43			
22	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	16:51:07	5/7/2016 16:51	52.64618	-105.777	1.7	3	356	0.4	512	4.08	5.84	0.04	32767	1.7	0	0	0	26.8	12			
23	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	16:36:34	5/7/2016 16:36	52.64616	-105.777	1.8	3	303	0.2	508.1	4.08	4.84	0	32767	1.7	0	0	0	26.67	44			
24	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	16:20:25	5/7/2016 16:20	52.64621	-105.777	1.1	3	197	0.6	510.2	4.08	6.2	0.11	32767	1.5	0	0	0	27.09	18			
25	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	16:04:43	5/7/2016 16:04	52.64619	-105.777	1.2	3	331	0.2	505	4.08	6.25	0.05	32767	1.8	0	0	0	26.29	12			
26	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	15:49:07	5/7/2016 15:49	52.64616	-105.777	1.2	3	94	0.3	500.3	4.08	5.5	0	32767	2.1	0	0	0	25.51	23			
27	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	15:33:19	5/7/2016 15:33	52.64618	-105.777	1.6	3	224	0.2	502	4.08	5.57	0	32767	3.9	0	0	0	24.77	12			
28	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	15:17:43	5/7/2016 15:17	52.62536	-105.781	1.9	3	320	0.2	522.3	4.08	6.03	0.03	32767	4	0	0	0	26.45	18			
29	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	15:02:01	5/7/2016 15:02	52.62538	-105.781	1.2	3	170	0.2	518.8	4.08	5.33	0	32767	1.8	0	0	0	26.29	18			
30	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	14:46:19	5/7/2016 14:46	52.6254	-105.781	1.2	3	188	0.1	518.7	4.08	5.96	0	32767	1.7	0	0	0	28.33	12			
31	8.95E+19	5/7/2016	14:30:42	5/7/2016 14:30	52.62537	-105.781	1.3	3	298	0.2	514.5	4.08	5.14	0	32767	1.7	0	0	0	25.96	13			

LP12 18Oct-10May

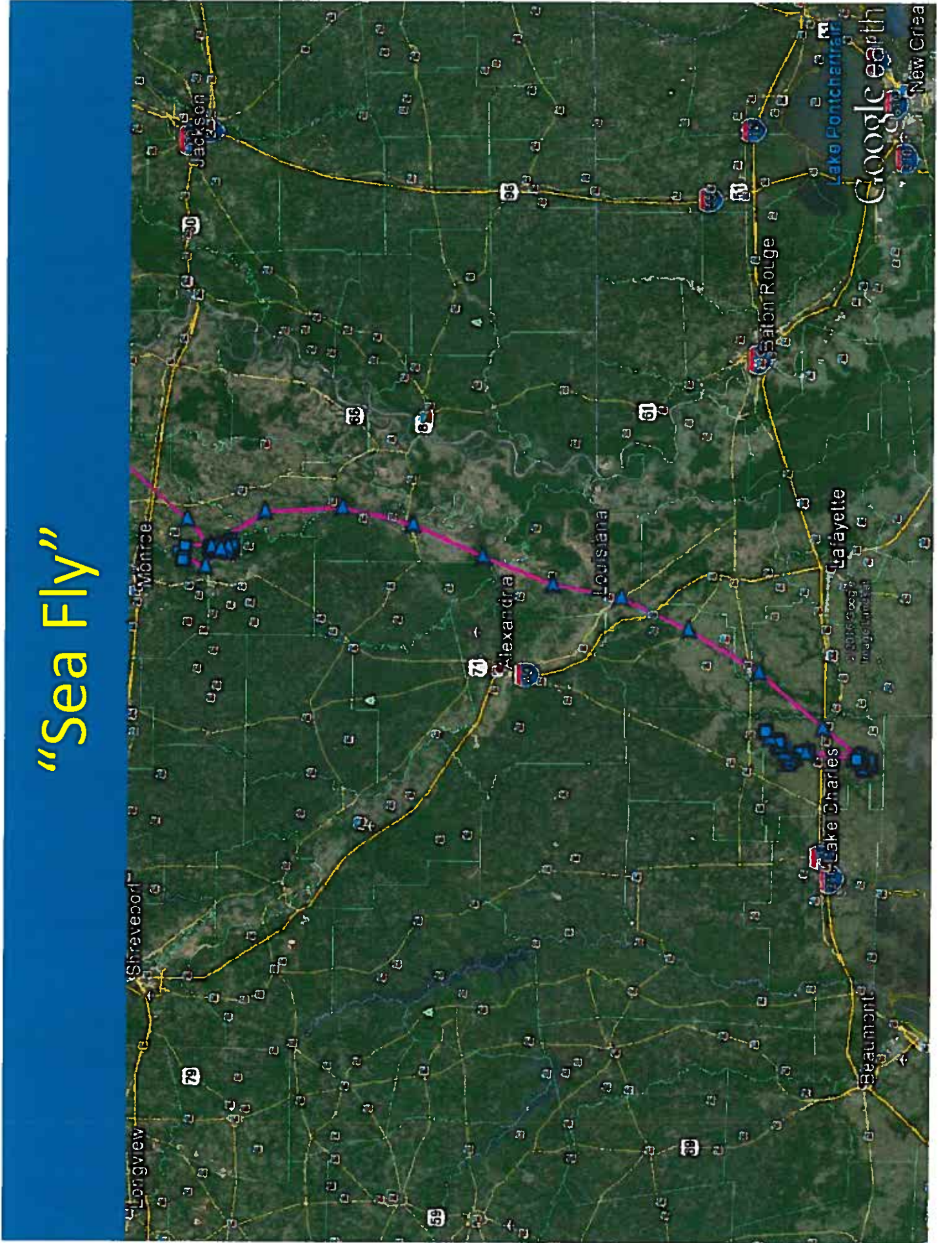
What does the data look like?



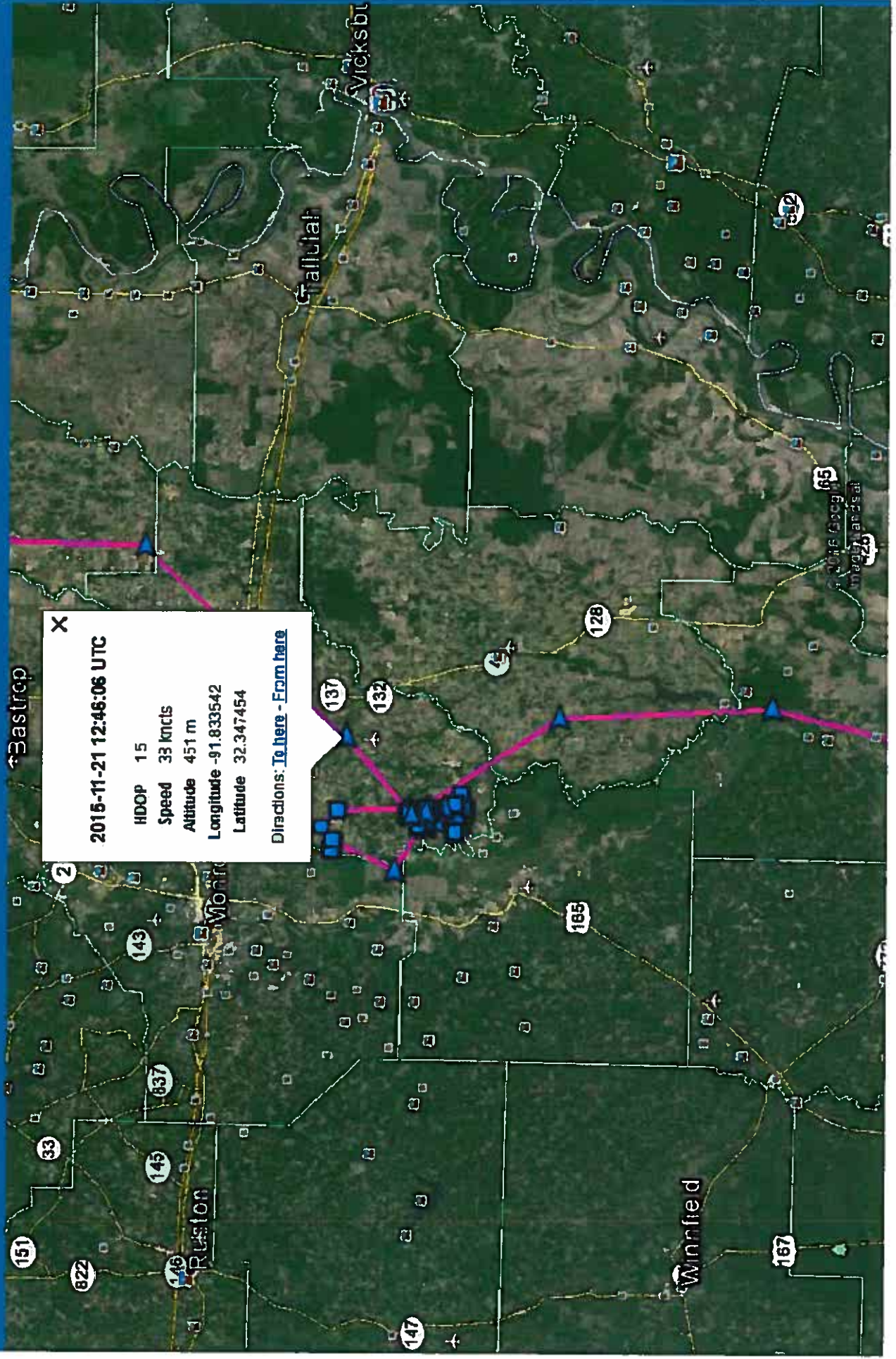
# "Sea Fly"



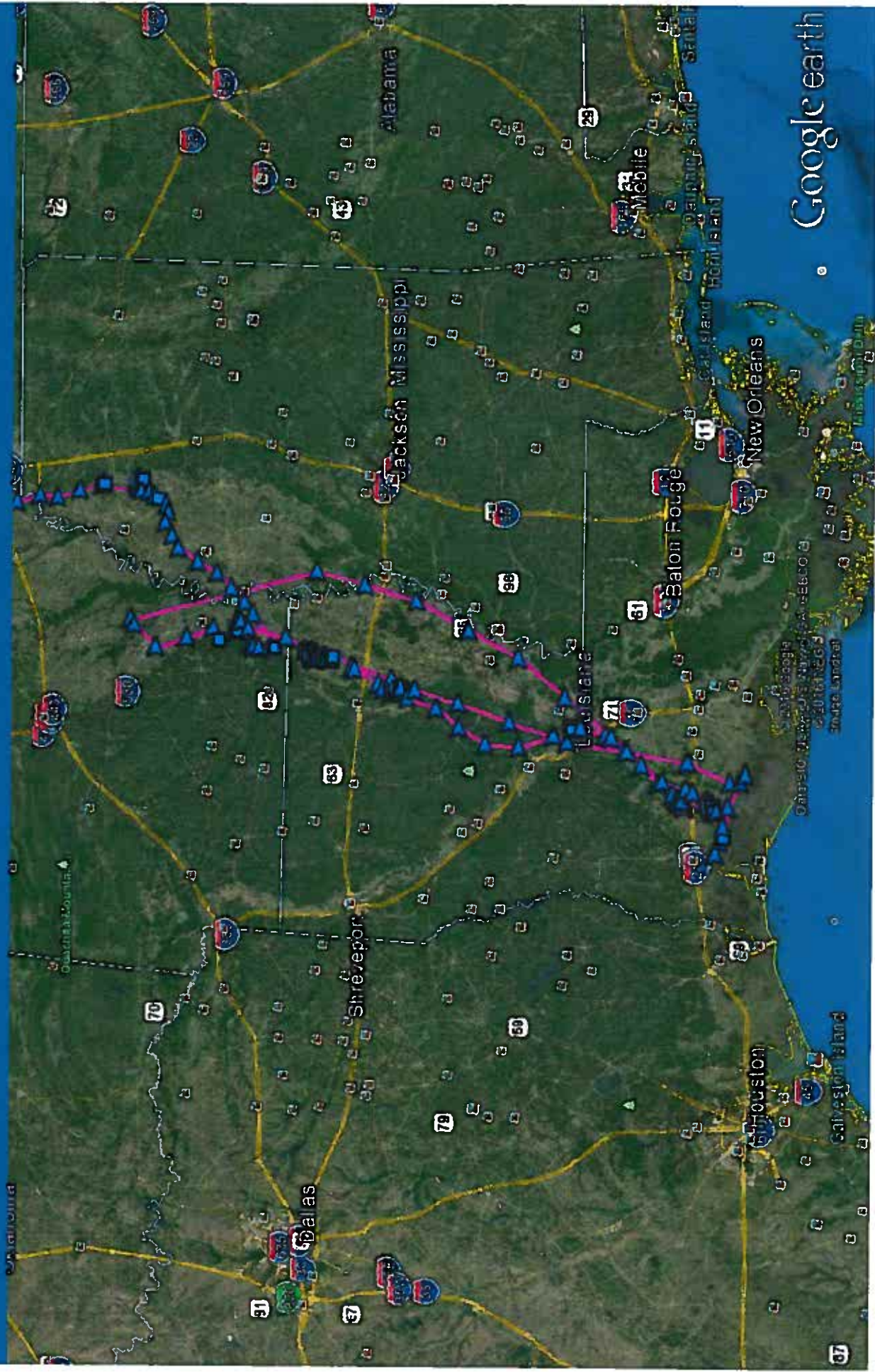
# "Sea Fly"



# "Sea Fly"



“GS365”

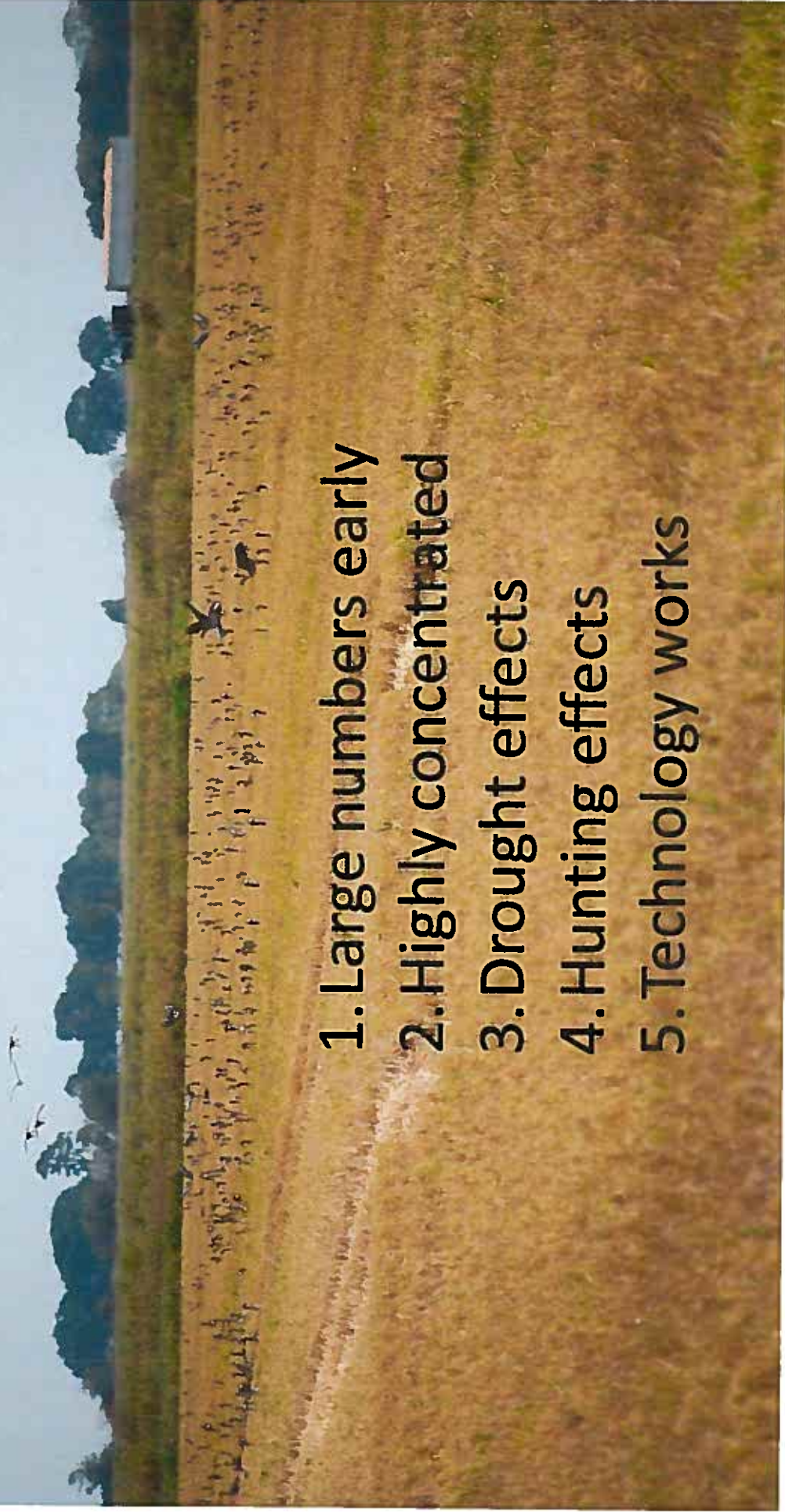


Google earth

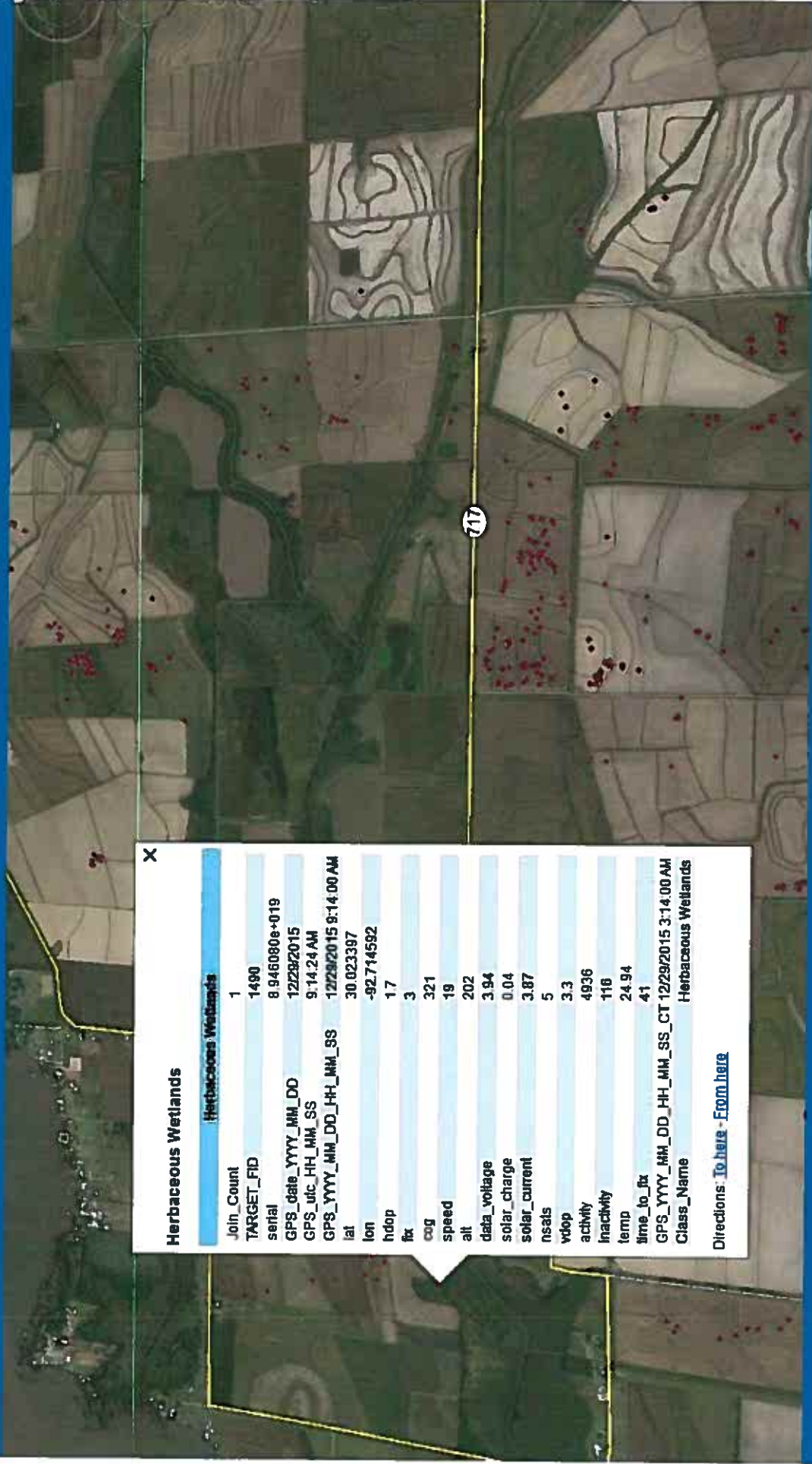


# Initial Thoughts

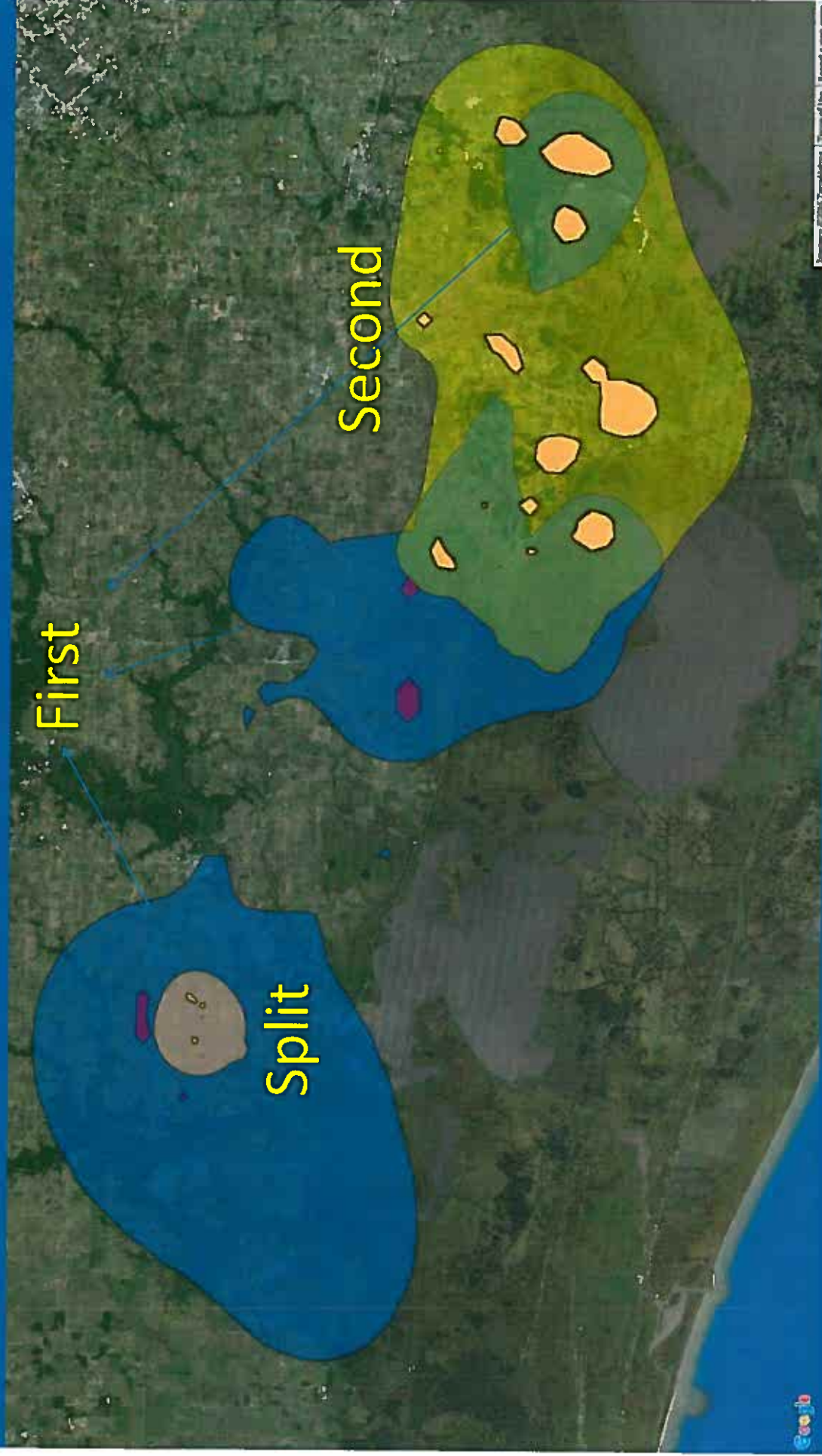
1. Large numbers early
2. Highly concentrated
3. Drought effects
4. Hunting effects
5. Technology works



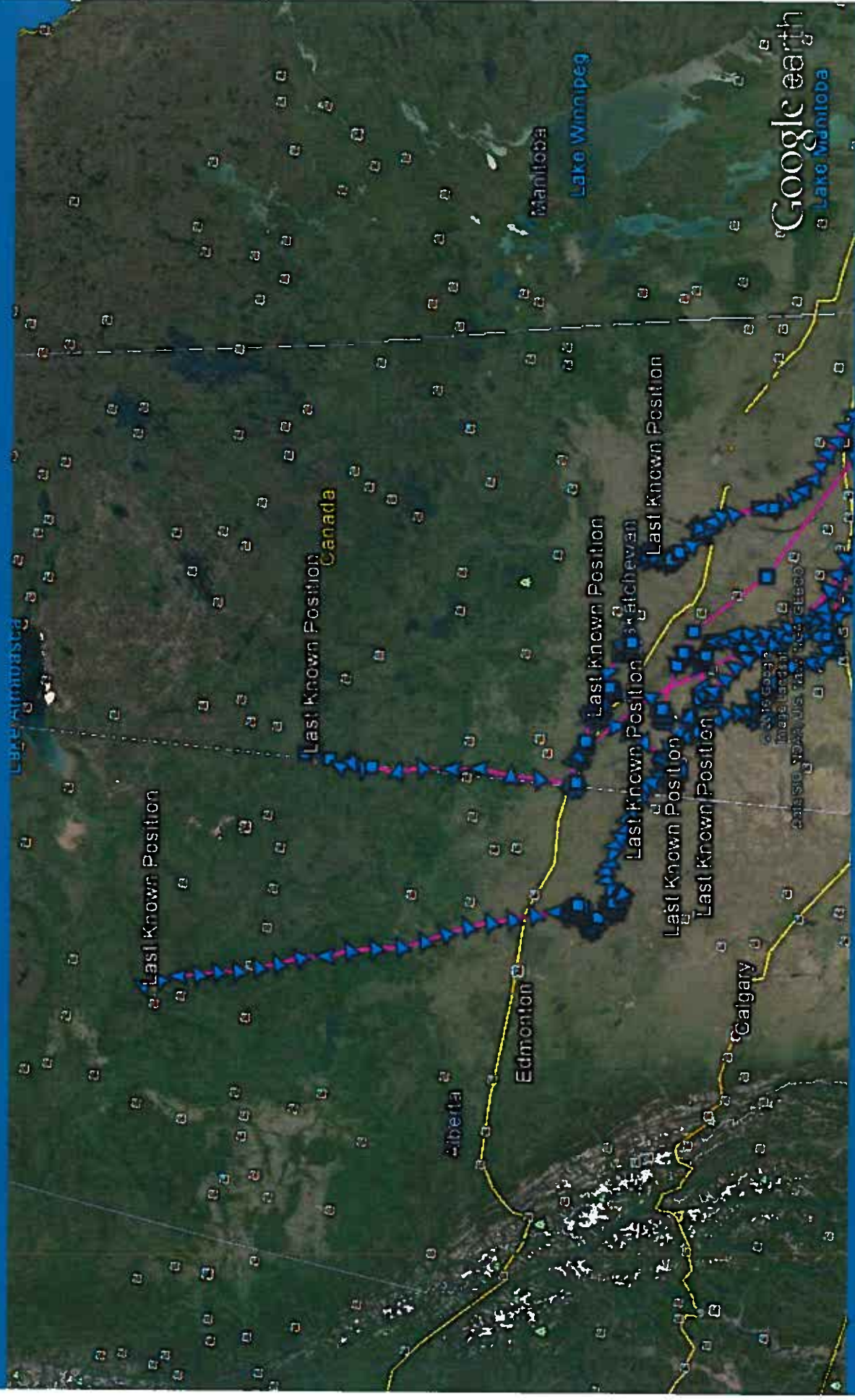
# Where am I now



# Where am I now

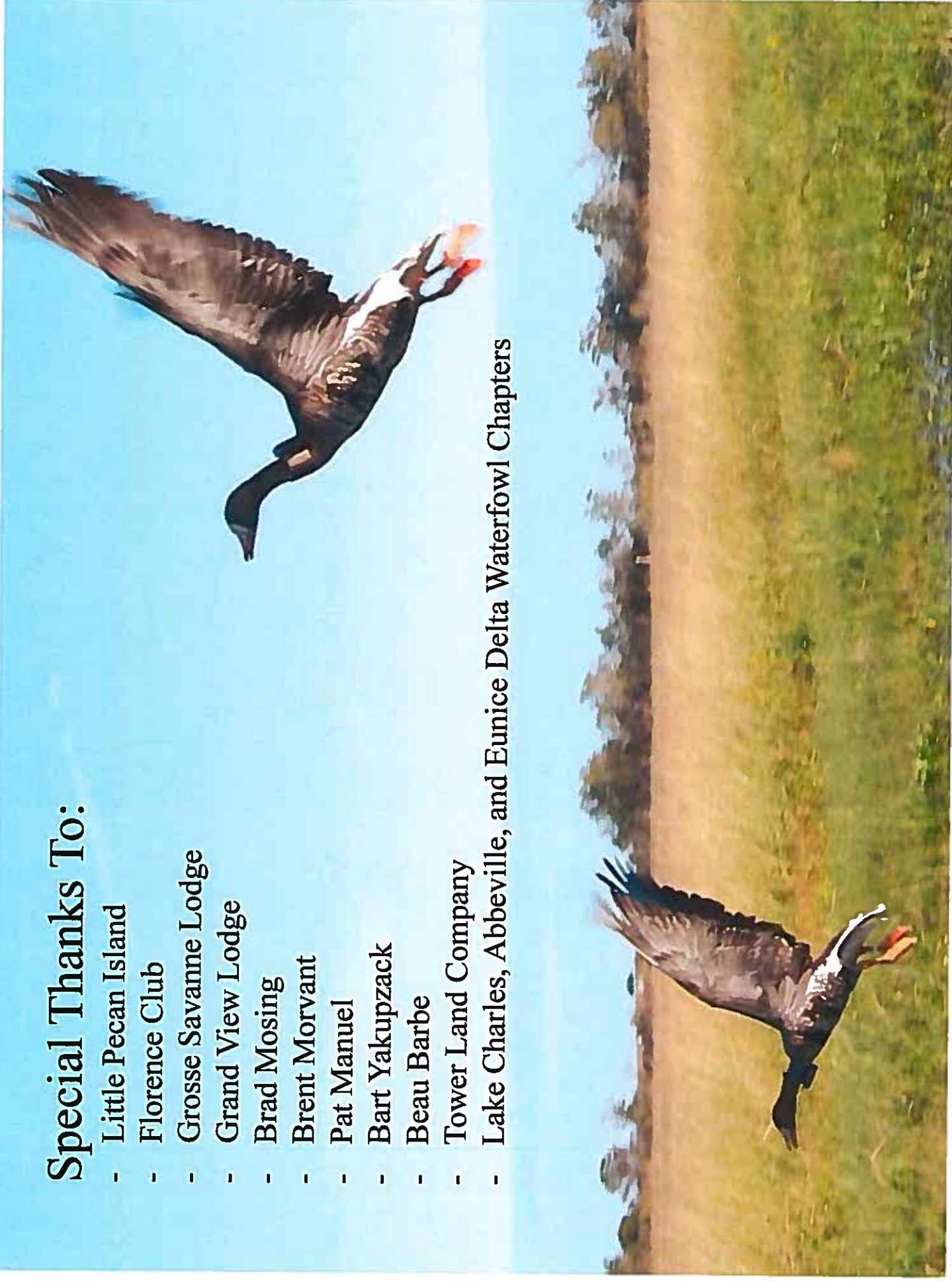


# Where are they now



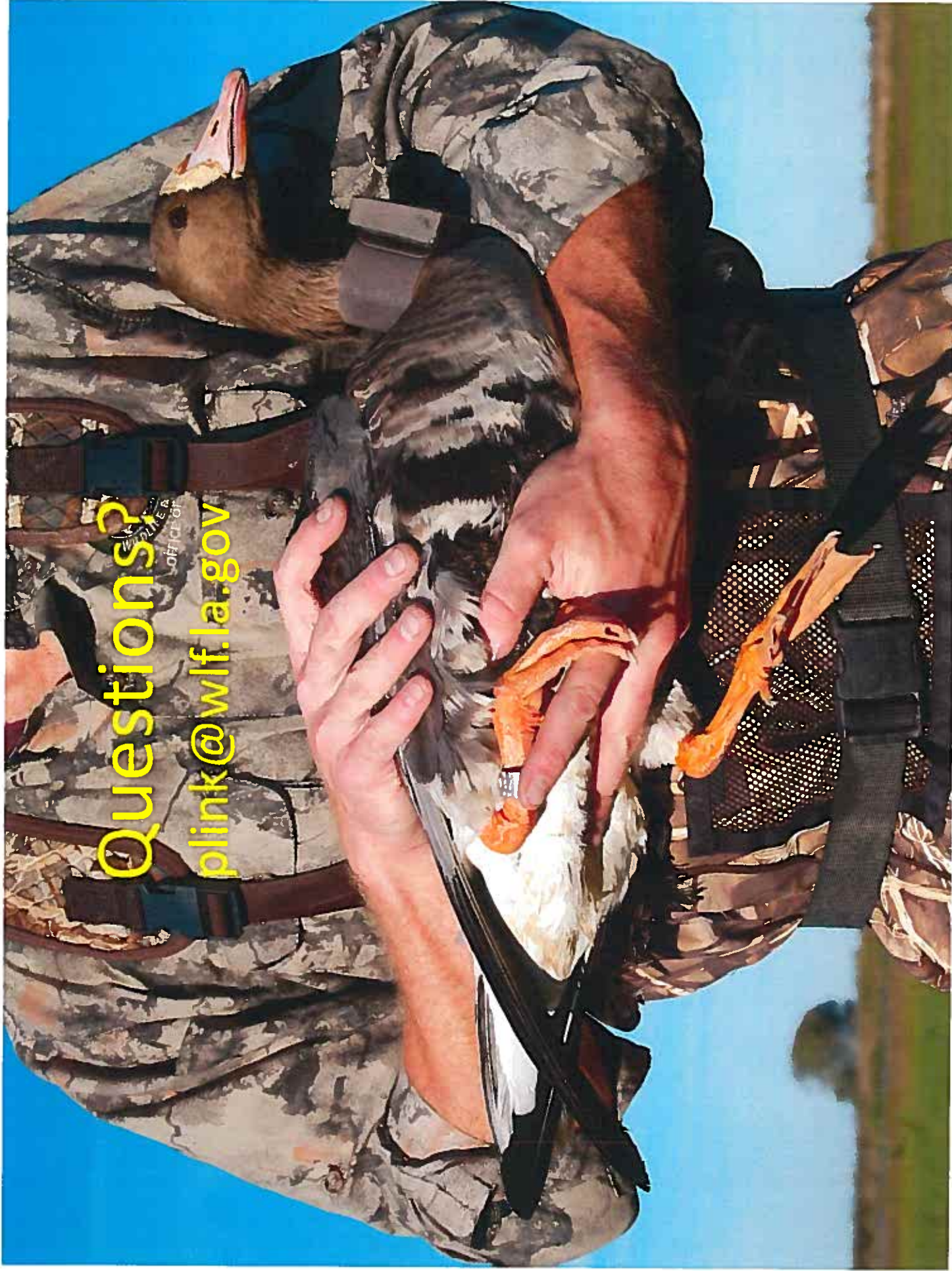
## Special Thanks To:

- Little Pecan Island
- Florence Club
- Grosse Savanne Lodge
- Grand View Lodge
- Brad Mosing
- Brent Morvant
- Pat Manuel
- Bart Yakupzack
- Beau Barbe
- Tower Land Company
- Lake Charles, Abbeville, and Eunice Delta Waterfowl Chapters



Questions?

[plink@wlf.la.gov](mailto:plink@wlf.la.gov)



# Cervid Carcass Importation and CWD Updates.

# Carcass Importation Bans

- 37 states and 2 Canadian Provinces with a cervid carcass importation ban.
- All states list exceptions for approved parts including: deboned meat, antlers, quarters not containing backbone and connective tissues, clean skull plates with antlers, cleaned skulls without tissue attached, capes, tanned hides, finished taxidermy mounts and cleaned cervid teeth.
- 7 of the 37 have a total ban for out-of-state cervid carcasses.
  - 3 of 7 have an exception for taxidermy and game processing pending the carcass parts are disposed in accordance of state regulations.
  - Ontario and Manitoba both have total bans including urine bans for attractants.
- 30 states restrict the importation of cervid carcass parts from CWD positive states only.
  - 2 of 30 have an exception for taxidermy and game processing pending the carcass parts are disposed in accordance of state regulations.

# Comments

- Support: 2 (1 phone, 1 email)
- Neutral: 3 (Questions regarding proposed regulation)(2 phone, 1 email)
  - Questions regarding disease transfer regarding cervid carcass parts and clarification of proposed regulation.
- Negative: 23 (23 email)
  - Primary complaints involve possession requirements in other states, reciprocal properties located in two states, difficulty in taxidermy requirements, concerns regarding the effectiveness of this regulation, and inconvenience.

## Answers to Primary Concerns: Are Cervid Carcass parts a realistic mode of transmission?

- 1985: Colorado Division of Wildlife attempted to eliminate CWD from a research facility by treating soil with chlorine and removal of treated soil. Restocking occurred after one year only to have animals reinfected.
- CWD binds to soil particles and persists in the environment for years. Researchers have injected research animals with infectious materials from burial sites to induce the prion disease.
- 2015: Univ. of Texas Health Science Center documented the transfer of prions in plant material. They were able to infect research animals by feeding them the infected wheat grass.

## Acceptable Disposal Practice

- Disposal of cervid carcass parts in an approved lined landfill.
- Incineration
- Field dressing and cervid carcass parts left at the site of harvest.

## CWD Preventative Measures in Louisiana

- Live cervid imports are currently prohibited. Continued cooperation between LDAF and The Deer Farmers Association is critical for continued protection.
- Continued testing of high risk or target animals.
- Proper disposal and handling of cervid carcass parts to prevent the infection or spread of the disease.
- Proposed cervid carcass importation regulations aimed at preventing infectious materials from entering the environment.
- Continued education regarding the risks of CWD.

#### A. Definitions

*Cervid*—any animal of the family *Cervidae* including but not limited to white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk, moose, caribou, fallow deer, axis deer, sika deer, red deer, and reindeer.

B. No person shall import, transport or possess any cervid carcass or part of a cervid carcass originating outside of Louisiana, except: deboned meat, antlers, clean skull plates with antlers, cleaned skulls without tissue attached, capes, tanned hides, finished taxidermy mounts and cleaned cervid teeth. Approved parts or deboned meat transported from other states must be legally possessed from the state it was taken. Approved parts and deboned meat from other states must contain a possession tag with the hunter's name, out-of-state license number (if required), address, species, date and location (county and state) of harvest. All cervids transported into or through this state in violation of the provisions of this ban shall be seized and disposed of in accordance with Wildlife and Fisheries Commission and Department of Wildlife and Fisheries rules and regulations.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with the Louisiana Constitution, Article IX, Section 7, R.S. 56:1, R.S. 56:5, R.S. 56:6(10), (13) and (15), R.S. 56:20, R.S. 56:112, R.S. 56:116.1 and R.S. 56:171 et seq.